Uncle Henry's Letters to the Farm Boy.

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UNCLE HENRY'S

LETTERS TO THE FARM BOY

BY

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PREFACE.

Twenty years hence the farm boy of to-day will mainly control the business of the state and nation, as it is now controlled by the farm boy of twenty-five years ago. To aid in starting this farm boy on the right track and make his pathway plainer and easier, is the object of this publication in its present form. I have known how the farm boy feels, for I have experienced his isolation, his hopes, his ambitions, his lack of experience and knowledge of the world, and hence I know his need of a kindly, sympathetic friend outside of the family, who will suggest rather than advise, guide rather than lead, who would rather commend than censure, and who is a boy in feeling though a man in years and experience.

Nothing was further from the writer's thought at the beginning of these letters than to write a book. The first was merely an effort to make matters smoother between a father and his son. The rest followed, I scarcely know how. This book wrote itself; like Topsy, "it growed." The marked favor with which the letters as first published in WALLACES' FARMER have been received, and the desire expressed on every hand to have

them in permanent form, leads me to hope that it will do its part in fitting the farm boy for his high destiny. The farm boy with his robust health, his independent spirit, his training in the primary virtues of industry, economy and uprightness, and his opportunities for clear thinking, may be the ruling power in this nation if he is rightly guided. To do his part in guiding the farm boy aright is the desire and ambition of

HENRY WALLACE.

EDITOR WALLACES' FARMER,
DES MOINES, IOWA,
SEPTEMBER, 1897.

CHAPTER I.

THE FARM BOY AND HIS FATHER.

My Dear Boy:

It has occurred to me that matters might not be going just exactly right between you and your father, and that a word from one who has been both farm boy and father might do good to both of you. I do not think for a moment that there is anything seriously wrong, only that neither of you are as happy in your relations with each other as you ought to be and can be. I take it for granted that you love and respect your father; not quite in the same way that you love your mother, because the affection that you bear to the one is distinctly different from that which you bear to the other, and must be in the very nature of things. I take it that you have a good father who loves you dearly

and who above all things else desires that you be a strong, true, brave, noble man, who will bear his name with honor when he is lying in his grave. I know he thinks more of you than he does of the farm and all that is on it, saving always your mother and your brothers and sisters. I take it that you are a good boy, and there is no reason why you and your father should not be as happy together as people can be in this world. If you are not, it is likely that both of you are somewhat to blame, and I will venture a guess as to why you are not as happy as I would like to see you.

You, perhaps, think your father is needlessly exacting in some things. He wants that stable cleaned out promptly and thoroughly, and wants the pigs fed just so every time, whether it is wet or dry, or a good day to go fishing or a bad one. He wants the cows milked clean, does not want any loud talking while milking, and he wants the milk cared for just so, and if

you fail in any of those things he does not like it, and you do not see why he should be so particular. Now, I will tell you why. Your father was probably a little bit careless himself when a boy; he sees the mistake; he knows how difficult it was for him to get over this habit, and he does not want you to have the same kind of trouble.

You do not see why he disapproves of your going out with a lot of other boys whom you regard as good fellows, but who have some bad habits, such, for example, as using profane language or indulging in obscene talk. Now, I will tell you why he does not want you to go with those boys. He possibly went more or less with that class of boys himself and knows from experience that they are not the kind of boys with whom you ought to associate.

He objects to your going out at night unless it be to some literary, or to make a social visit to your neighbor. Now, he is perfectly right about this because he has

had experience and you have not. You do not see why he insists on your going to church every Sabbath and to Sabbath-school, even if you are tired and sleepy and would like a good, long day's rest. Again I tell you why. He felt when he was a boy just as you do, but years have taught him the necessity of acquiring steady and regular habits of industry, morality and religion. Your father has lived a long time, has had lots of experience and knows a great deal that books can not teach, and he would like above all things else to be able to impart that experience to you, which he knows that he can not impart except by insisting on your acquiring it by the doing of it. That is the only way that anything worth learning can be learned. In all these things your father is exactly right.

You perhaps feel that he ought to give you a chance to earn something for yourself; that there ought to be something on the farm which is your very own, or, as

your sister might say, your "ownest own." Well, I think so, too. I think you are entirely right in this, and if I were in your place I would, some day after supper when he was not troubled in any way, talk the matter over with him in a manly, open way. Nothing pleases a father so much as to see his boy develop manliness. I would talk to him about this, but I would make a square bargain that if you are to have a pig, or a calf, or a colt on the terms agreed on, it is to be your hog, or your steer, or your horse when it is disposed of, and you are to be the sole judge, after asking his advice, as to how you are to use that money.

You think your father should not bind you down so closely as to the plan you are to take in doing certain things about the farm. You want to exercise your own judgment, and have, so to speak, a little leeway. You are willing to do the things he wants you to do, but you would like to do a little planning and thinking

for yourself as to the way of doing them. Here you may be right and again you may be wrong; but I think he had better say to you, "My son, there are certain results that I want accomplished: I think you had better do this way, but if you see a better way, try your hand." You will probably find that his way is the right way after all, but it will do no harm to find that out by experience.

You may think that your father is a little of an old fogy in some matters connected with farming. There is a possibility that he is, and again there is a possibility that his long years of experience enable him to see through the fallacy of a lot of theories that you may not be able to do as yet. Therefore, I would advise before condemning his ideas, to study them quite thoroughly and weigh carefully what you may see on the other side. He may not be able to give you as good reasons as you may see on the other side on paper, but I suspect that he has the

common sense of it pretty firmly fixed under his gray hairs, and may not have the patience to sit down and argue the thing out with you.

I would like for you to have a profound respect for your father's views on all questions. They may be wrong; no doubt many of them are; but you should remember that "knowledge comes but wisdom lingers." It may be that you know a good deal more than your father. If so, it is because you take it after your mother; but whether you really know it must be clearly established by actual results, and not assumed.

In order to have a proper respect for your father, you must not call him "dad," or "pap," or "pa," or "the old gent," or "the governor," as I have heard a good many English boys call their fathers. There is but one name that he is entitled to, and he is entitled to that every time; and that name is "father," never "the old

gentleman." The very act of calling him father will make you respect him and respect yourself, and smoothe out any little trouble that there may be between you. It is essential to your growth and future happiness that you and your father have the most perfect understanding with each other. By and by he will come to trust you implicity. First, he will be to you a sort of older brother; and as the years go on he will learn to depend on you, to lean on you, so to speak, and by and by will be disposed, when he begins to lean heavily on his staff, to pay as much deference to your opinion as you did to his when you were a little boy. You thought then that father knew it all. He will think after awhile that you know it all, and that whatever you do is about right because you do it.

I write this to you because I have known boys who took a different course from that which I advise you to take, and who

have blighted their own lives and their fathers' lives, and broken their mothers' hearts, and I do not want you to do either.

Affectionately,

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER II.

THE FARM BOY AND HIS MOTHER.

My Dear Boy:

You will, I am sure, pardon me if I venture to write to you on some matters that are in a manner sacred, and I do, solely because I believe I can do you some good for which you may thank me ever afterwards. Your Uncle Henry is now over sixty years old, and can, therefore, talk to you as he would not have dared to do twenty years ago. He has all his life had much to do with boys, has boys of his own, and thinks that a bright boy, clean in life, in word and thought, is every whit as noble and admirable a character as a bright, pure-minded, beautiful girl. He has all his life noticed that a boy of this class has almost invariably a good mother, and more than that, that he is a good

mother's boy as long as his mother lives. You have no doubt read the account of the inauguration of President McKinley, and you know that his tenderness toward his aged mother lifted him in your opinion much higher on that occasion that anything that he said in his inaugural address. You have often heard it said of some bad man, "There must be something good about him after all or he would not be so kind to his mother." I can assure you right now that your whole after life will depend very much on the way you treat your mother. In all past ages men have noted this fact. "Honor thy father and thy mother," said Paul, "which is the first commandment with promise." That promise was, "Long life and life and prosperity to such as keep this commandment," and noting the fact that disobedient boys come to a bad end, an inspired writer said:

"The eye that mocketh at his father,—and despiseth to obey his mother,
The ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it."

This is a simple statement of this principle that there is a very close and intimate relation between a boy's success in life and the filial affection which he shows to his father and especially to his mother. It is in the home and in early childhood that we acquire those qualities that make us truly successful. We learn to love by first loving our mother, we learn respect and reverence from our father, and we learn to respect the rights of others from our brothers and sisters. From my heart I pity the boy who is either motherless or fatherless, and scarcely less do I pity the only son or daughter. They are all necessarily dwarfed specimens of humanity. Note the little apple in the heart of the blossom. The blossom is the home in which the fruit is enfolded until it is fit to endure the sunshine and the storm. If the blossom is injured the apple never amounts to anything. Even after it grows to maturity and the blossom has long since fallen away, it still leaves its mark on the

apple. So it is in your home life. "Poor boy," we often say, "his father died when he was a baby," or, "He had no mother," or, "He was an only child," when we wish to excuse weakness for which there is no other palliation.

You are entitled, my dear boy, to all the good a good mother can do you, but you can never realize this until you are good to your mother, and the one proof of this love will be in seeing that the wood is always dry, that she has as little drudgery as possible to do about the farm, and that her mind is ever free from care.

Now, let me tell you of some things that you will be tempted to do. Some boy will wish you to join him in something you know your mother would not approve. He will sometimes sneer at you and call you "mother's boy," and say you are "tied to your mother's apron strings." I would not advise you to knock that boy down, because the sneer is directed at you and you can afford to let it pass, but if he says anything against your mother

you have my permission to slap his mouth. Do not let any boy of your age or size say a word disrespectful of your mother. Let her religious convictions, her ideas of duty and propriety, her faults even, be too sacred to be found fault with by mortal man.

You are likely, as you approach manhood, to put too little store in your mother's judgment. When a boy gets to be from sixteen to nineteen or twenty he is apt to speak lightly of women and think lightly of his mother's influence. She may not be as good a scholar as you are, may not know half so many things, but your Uncle Henry would take her judgment offhand in preference to yours in all matters that affect character or life. When you get to know women better than you now do, you will find they have a very queer way of guessing at the rights of things and guessing right nearly every time. A man reasons, a woman divines; a man thinks things out, a woman feels them out. Your mother is not infallible nor yet

perfect, but she is so nearly certain to be right about matters that affect your character and life that you can not afford to treat her intuitions lightly. If you do, you will make a mistake.

When you become a man you will have a wife of your own, or ought to. You won't own it to me, but I you suppose are thinking once in a while about that time. She may be a little jealous that any woman should share your affections; possibly she may not be able to help it, but let me say to you that she knows more about other women than you do or ever will. If you are as good to your mother as you ought to be she will in the proper time take your girl into her heart and life as a daughter indeed.

You will be all the happier if you make your mother your confidant in your love affairs. Confidentially I may say to you, she is ordinarily about the only one of the family you can advise with freely on that subject. Your brothers and sisters might laugh at you, and you do not like

to talk to your father about it, but I assure you that you can have no better adviser in a matter which may be happiness or misery unspeakable to you than your own mother. There is something very beautiful and touching in the affection of a mother toward a good boy when her hair is white and her step tottering. His hair, too, may be gray, but to her he is a boy still, repaying in tenderness and kindness and helpfulness that quenchless love which she lavishes upon him from childhood to manhood. By kindness and tenderness, by making her your confidant now, you can make your mother the happiest of women and at the same time do much to make your own life a success. One little act of kindness shown her each day will do it.

Affectionately,

YOUR UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER III.

THE FARM BOY AND HIS TEMPER.

My Dear Boy:

I have not sized you up as a goody-goody boy such as too often figure in Sunday school books. Such boys are too often like the apples that ripen too early, indicating that the tree is on the decline. I do not think there is much danger of your dying early on account of being too good for this world. I have seen you get mad and fight and sometimes heard you say words not found in the dictionary. I do not approve of these things; neither will you when you are older; and yet I have more hope of a boy built in that way than of one who is goody good, and a great deal more than of one who prides himself on his cunning and deceit, or who delights in doing little,

underhanded, mean things, such as telling tales out of school, and meanwhile playing the role of a saint. But, my boy, if you are to make your mark in this world you will have to learn to curb that temper, a thing which you can never do until you learn to curb that tongue.

I know how many things there are about the farm that make a boy mad and let his tongue loose at both ends. There is, for instance, the experienced brood sow that will go the wrong way when you drive her, that will not lead worth a cent, and goes about where she pleases. Her pigs seem to lie awake nights thinking how to get into the garden or potato patch, and when you discover the little rascals they clear out with an air that seems to say: "Didn't we come it over our bubby?" Then there is the cow that opens the gate as if her horns were hands, and that other cow that kicks on the slightest excuse and generally manages to get one foot in the bucket when it is half-full. Then, there is the wise old brood mare that will come

at your call in the pasture and take the corn out of your hand, but if you reach for her foretop, will show you her heels, and let you feel them, too, unless you are lively. I do not wonder that you get angry and are tempted to take a club to the sow, beat the cow with the milk stool and whip the old mare—when you get a chance. I have felt just that way many a time. Then, there is the balky horse that looks around over his shoulder when he comes to a soft place in the road or to a little hill, and stops and stays stopped—a regular quitter that will neither be coaxed nor forced to budge an inch, and seems to enjoy your anger. You may be pushing the mower in hay harvest and about every rod or two the sickle runs into a gopher hill and you have to stop and back, and clean it off, and are scarcely back in your seat until you run into another hill, and this time you say, "Confound the gophers," or perhaps worse. Or, you may be in a hurry to get off a load of hay and get in another before the rain and the horse fork

takes a tantrum and drops the forkful too soon or twists around and will not drop it at all, and your father loses his temper and comes tearing in to know what keeps you so long at the barn.

Oh, the farm is a grand place to try a boy's temper. It is almost sure to rain at the very time when you are promised a day's fishing, and the best horse on the place goes lame when you expect to take your best girl to the Fourth of July. At least that is the way it used to be. Nevertheless, my boy, you will have to get the better of your temper or your life will be somewhat of a failure, and the less you curb it the more of a failure your life will be.

For a boy or girl to get mad and fly off the handle is somewhat excusable; for a man, never—well, hardly ever. "Be ye angry and sin not," said an inspired apostle who, himself once got angry and called the chief justice a "whited wall," which means simply a first-class scoundrel, so I presume there is an anger that is al-

together justifiable; at least I hope so, but "let not the sun go down upon your wrath." The boy is not supposed to have gained control of himself; the man is. I know men, and a good many of them, who are very strong in many ways, have nearly every other element of great success but this one of self-control, and they sometimes make stark fools of themselves and lose the respect of their best friends because they fly in a passion on very slight pretexts; or, what is even worse, sulk and pout and then go home at night and kick the dog, scold their wives, if they dare, and their children go off to the barn or to bed for fear of their father's anger. This is what may happen you when you become a man unless you get control of your temper and your tongue while you can.

Now let me whisper a secret: That cow and the brood mare would not be half so "ornery"if somebody had not been in the habit of losing his temper. That balky horse would never have learned to balk if

his first owner had had good horse sense and controlled his temper. I do not say that any measure of self-control on the part of the owner will take the contrariness out of a hog, but it will take away the opportunity of showing it.

You ask me how to control that temper. Let me confess to you that it is not an easy matter, but where there is a will there is a way and a wise father and mother will help you in this good work. Your Uncle Henry had a furious temper when a boy. He got mad when he was turned down at school, and flew off the handle about something or other nearly every day. He remembers very distinctly his first lesson in curbing his temper. His father put a J. I. C. bit on him one morning very neatly. He did not like something at the breakfast table and on being reproved flew off as usual. The first thing he knew he got a dash of very cold water in the face, and then another and another. The shock enabled him to get control of his nerves. He then and

there found that he could control his temper if he but tried. It is all nonsense to say that a boy can not control his temper. Did I not see you the other day in a passion when working on the road? The other boys laughed at you and you looked around and saw your best girl coming in a buggy and looking as sweet and cool as a rose after a shower, and in a second you were all smiles and touched your hat to her and felt a little ashamed of yourself all that day. No matter how angry you are you can hold your tongue when a stranger for whom you have great respect is present. If you can do it with this outside help, you can, if you try, do it without it.

Bear this in mind, that sinful anger is never a mark of strength or of manliness, but always of weakness. It is a sign of immaturity—vealishness, if you wish to call it such. It never contributes to happiness and always makes a sensible man feel cheap and mean when he comes to himself. I am free to say that I have

never been angry without good cause, and let my tongue loose without afterwards loathing and despising myself. One cannot afford to lose his self-respect and hence to maintain it is obliged to secure self-control.

One can sometimes do by indirection what he can not do directly. When a farm boy I once caught a preacher whistling on Sunday morning, which I was taught was a very great sin, and ventured to ask him why he did it. He colored up and said: "I'll tell you, my boy, how I got into the habit. I had a fearfully bad temper when I was a young man and resolved to whistle whenever I found my temper rising. I then got into the habit of whistling whenever I was thinking seriously about anything, and I was just now thinking over my sermon, and it whistled itself." Another once told me he got control by counting three before he let his tongue loose on the other fellow. Mind this, if you can keep your tongue between your teeth you will have little trouble with your temper.

I don't say a man should never become angry. Far less do I say he should not show resentment. There are some things on the farm and a thousand times as many off it calculated to make a true man's blood boil and fill him with righteous indignation, and he ought by all means to show it. Neither man nor boy has any right to stand insult or endure wrong without showing resentment, and that in a most pointed way. A man or boy who allows another to wrong him or insult him without resenting it lacks something essential in the proper makeup of a true man, and actually becomes an an accessory to wrong doing. I think the recording angel conveniently forgets to report the boy who knocks down the bully who by brute force terrorizes weaker boys. If I had the reporting to do I would look the other way, and if I happened to see it would report a credit mark instead. The public sentiment that justifies a brother in putting a bullet hole through the man who ruined his sister is

not wholly evil. It teaches brutes to control their passions and fools to hold their tongues. Resentment, however, to be effective, must be with perfect self-control. If you have to show your teeth do it deliberately and show just enough and no more. If you bite, do it with perfect coolness and to good purpose. You can never do this unless you control your temper. The boy to be feared is the boy who can knock you down and smile, whose eyes are ablaze with fire and yet under perfect control. It is this that marks the really strong man that I wish you to be.

You will be surprised to find how much the habits of the stock on the farm will improve when you get control of yourself. On many farms the live stock unconsciously tell the observant man just what kind of a temper the owner, or some of the boys, or perhaps the hired man, has. Remember what Bobbie Burns said: "Know, prudent, cautious self-control is wisdom's root." So thinks your

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FARM BOY AND HIS CHUM.

My Dear Boy:

If you are to become the good and true man that your father and mother hope you will be, it is very important that you choose the right kind of a friend. Tell me the kind of a chum a boy has, and I will tell you what sort of a boy he is and what type of a man he is likely to become.

I sometimes think that it is essential to the right development of a boy that he should have, first, a dog; second, a chum; and third, and last, his best girl. It is a little too soon to talk about "the last and best" yet, but if you have fallen in love with the right kind of a dog and selected the right kind of a chum, you will not go far wrong on the best girl; and if you do not find her, she will happen in on your

path by accident, or Providence, when the right time comes. Your father knows all about that, I am sure. I like the boy that likes a good dog, a dog that is bright, honest and industrious—that looks you square in the eye without flinching, and will fight for you when it is time to fight, and there is something wrong with the boy that likes a downright mean, cowardly dog—a dog with a bad conscience.

After the dog, but generally along with with it, comes the chum, and he is the making or marring of more boys than parents think.

I like a boy who has one particular friend about his own age, a friend or chum with whom he delights to be, and stands by through thick and thin in all things right and honest. We have no right, whether men or boys, to stand by any one through thick and thin who is not in the right. Our allegiance to right is above and beyond our obligations to anything or any person on earth. Do not forget that. If the boy's chum is a thor-

oughly good, manly boy, the mother may feel that her boy is safe. It is not every boy, nor every farm boy, that is fit to be a farm boy's friend. There are whole classes of boys that he should avoid as friends, if he does not wish to sup sorrow sooner or later. I say "avoid as friends." I do not say avoid altogether. You are soon to go out into a world that has all sorts of people in it, from the worst to the best, and you will have to mingle with them more or less, and you should learn to touch the worst and not be defiled. You may as well begin now and learn to be among the bad and yet not be of them.

To begin with, have the least possible to do with the boy who likes to use bad language; who loves to tell smutty stories, and who has a low opinion of women, especially of girls of his own age. That is the worst sort of a boy that you can have anything whatever to do with. If you like that kind of a boy I pity you. I pity your father and mother, and I sincerely hope you will never marry. If you

choose him as your friend, you will in a few years not be fit to look a decent girl in the face. If you should afterwards repent and be converted, you will not even then be able in all your life to get rid entirely of his corrupting influence. I know men now who are trying to be Christians, and who yet, I am told, when they fall in with old chums and the like, vomit filth like a turkey buzzard. These men had filthy chums when they were boys, and they will be more or less filthy when they fall in with filthy folks as long as they live. Think what a hell it must be for a man to carry around with him filthy recollections which in his better moments he loathes and hates, and to keep on doing it until the end of his days. He had about as well be chained to a corpse. Keep your mind clean and pure and make no friendships with a filthy minded boy.

Do not make a chum of a profane boy. He may have many good qualities, but he speaks of the God who made him in a way that even he would not allow any boy to

speak of his father or mother. Either he does not believe there is a Supreme Being, in which case he is not a fit companion for you, or he defies Him, which is worse, or he is an ignorant fellow and uses profane language only by way of emphasis. In neither case is he fit to be your chum. You expect to be regarded as a gentleman when you grow up, and even if there were no sin in it, you do not want to get into the habit of using language that by common consent is never heard in the society of gentlemen and ladies.

Under no circumstances choose the bully of the neighborhood or of the school for your friend. Boys are often tempted to do so. You may admire his strength, his seeming courage, his brute force; you may think yourself safe under his protection. Do not do it. It is brain force combined with moral courage and integrity that rules the world, not self-assertion or brute force. Avoid the bully as much as possible. Do not quarrel with him; do not give an opportunity, if you can help it,

for him to bully you. Keep away from him as much as possible, and when you see that your unwillingness to submit to his domination is regarded as an insult, get you a pair of boxing gloves and practice with your father or brothers or the hired man in the barn, and then, lick the bully. Down at the bottom the bully is always a coward. I suffered much, when a boy, from this breed of cattle. My father told me that if I ever got into a fight at school, I would get a licking when I got home. I endured tortures from the bully of the school because it was known that John Wallace would not allow his boys to fight. I broke over the rule once —my father never knew it,—and I had peace afterwards. Why do I insist on this point? I will tell you. The bully is a brute as a boy; a failure as a man. He develops a type of character that makes men fear him and hate him. He never has any true friends, and the man that cannot attach men to him as friends is a failure even though he be worth millions.

You do not want to develop that type of character; therefore do not choose that sort of a boy as your chum.

Do not choose for your chum the boy who cannot control his temper. That sort of a boy is not safe. He may have many good qualities, may mean well, but he is not safe. Solomon, the wise old fellow, saw this point long ago when he said: "Make no friendship with an angry man, and with a furious man thou shalt not go." He will make it more difficult for you to control your temper, and you never know when he will fly off and shame you. You had better be loaded down with disease or debt than with a temper you cannot control.

Choose as your chum the boy that respects his father, loves his sister, fights for his little brother and adores his mother; the boy that is clean in his speech and instinctively shuns the vulgar and profane; the boy that never quarrels when it can possibly be avoided, but will not be insulted without resenting it in manner and

words, and if necessary as a last resort, by blows; the boy that is industrious, economical, and has a profound respect for things sacred. Choose as your friend the boy that has good blood in him; that comes of the best stock of people in the neighborhood. It matters little whether his father is rich or poor. Wealth should cut no figure in a boy's friendships. In point of fact it seldom does. The only real republic that exists in this world is the republic of boyhood. This is one reason I like boys better than I do girls, and I used to like girls a good deal, and do yet. Boys do not recognize class distinctions until they become men and get spoiled. If your father is poor and you are the right sort of a boy, the best woman in the neighborhood will be glad to welcome you as her boy's chum, and if your father is rich and a wise man, he will welcome any manly boy to his home as the friend of his son. He knows the value of good blood in a boy, and by good blood I mean that he comes from a good

family whose instincts are right, who naturally like things that are honest and pure and of good report, whether they have made money or not. If you choose this sort of a boy as your chum, it matters very little whether you live in town or country. There is not much danger of your falling into bad habits. Boys of lower instincts may call you proud and stuck up because you try to keep yourself out of the dirt. Never mind; down in their heart of hearts they respect you all the more for it.

If you want your chum to be true to you, you must be true to him. A boy that would have friends must show himself friendly, and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. That friend is the right kind of a chum. That is not the way the preachers interpret this text, but it is what Solomon meant; at least so thinks

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER V.

THE FARM BOY AND HIS READING.

My Dear Boy:

I need scarcely tell you that your future will be largely influenced by your reading. Tell me what a farm boy reads and I can tell you what kind of a boy he is; tell me what he continues to read and I can tell you what he is likely to be. The boy who is not a reader in this day and age of the world is very likely to be a nobody. Whether, if he reads, he will be any credit to himself or his friends will be determined largely by what he reads. The farm boy should read not for amusement or recreation, but to learn what he needs most of all to know. He is a new beginner in this world and his future is all before him; it will be about what he makes it and it is more important for him than any one else to

know the truth, the real facts of life, and especially those facts that bear upon the profession, business, or occupation that he may choose for the future. The farm boy of all others has no time to fool away in reading truck, of which, I am sorry to say, the world is altogether too full. Of books, I would say first of all read the Bible. Its first chapters are the oldest literature of the world. You want to know where you came from, what you are here for, and where you are going, and this is the only Book that can tell you anything reliable and accurate regarding these three all-important questions. I would not have you read the Bible solely as a religious duty, nor have you regard it with superstitious reverence. I would have you read it as you would any other book that contains information which it is of the utmost importance for you to know, It is the only book that I know of that will tell you the exact truth about men and things. It is the only book that teaches the absolutely correct way of liv-

ing and states principles, belief in which is essential to the highest success. I would have you read this until i becomes like the iron in your blood, and would have you do so all the same if there were no other world than this. The great nations of the world are all readers of this Book; so are its great men. The just laws of the world all have their roots in it. It teaches men how to keep clean morally, mentally and spiritually; and whatever else you may omit, you can not afford not to know what this book teaches. I would, therefore, first of all, have you read this Book which the people who have made the world what it is believe to contain the revealed will of God. You can make no mistake here. If it condemns you, it does so to make a man of you; if it commends your course, you need not fear for the future, either in this world or the next. By all means read the Bible.

As to other books, it is easier to tell you what not to read than to read. If you wish to learn how to express yourself in

the clearest, simplest and most forcible English, read Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress. It will teach you much more than this, but it is worth reading once a year for the next ten years for this only. If you wish to know what men, and especially women, are, master Shakespeare. Read the plays over and over until you get hold of the idea, then study the characters in detail. You can afford to read some of these plays every year. I would have you a man of few books. There are but few books in this world that the farm boy has time to read or that it would pay him to read. It is the man who reads few books, and reads them over and over again until they are part of his being, incorporated in his very nature, that will make his headway in the world. He is the man to be feared by his foes and trusted by his friends. Never under any circumstances read a book that is written in bad spirit, that sneers at things sacred, that raises doubts which it cannot satisfy, or a ques-

tion which it does not attempt to answer fully and fairly.

You say you have no time to read these books. Take an old farm boy's word for it that you have more time now than you are likely ever to have again. Now, as to your school books: Master them every one completely and thoroughly. Do not finally lay away a school book until you are certain that you know everything that it can teach you. It is not the man who knows a little of everything who makes a success of life, but the man who knows a few things and knows all about them. In addition to this, read history, particularly of your own country and of the English people and of the race from which your father sprung. With diligence you can do all this before you leave the farm, if you ever leave it, and whether you are a farmer or a business man you will never regret taking this advice. I want you to be a strong man, fit for any position you may be called upon to take in the world, and you cannot do it unless you are a

reader, a thorough reader, and a reader of the right kind of books.

You will read newspapers of course. You do not lose anything by not having the daily paper. A good weekly paper will give you all the news of the world that is worth knowing. Your county paper will give you all the local news. You should keep yourself posted on what is going on in your own community. If you wish a monthly compendium of the best thoughts and most important events of the world, take the Review of Reviews. It will cost you $3.00 a year and save you the necessity of getting any other magazine. I would have you throw aside any newspaper that is written with a bad spirit, or that would make you believe that the world, this country in particular, is going to the bad, or that will make you believe that the parties to which you do not belong are full of bad men. You will be told continually that the republicans are rogues, the democrats fools, and the populists cranks. Now, there are some rogues

among the republicans, some fools among the democrats and some cranks among the populists; but the great majority by far of all these parties are good people who wish well for their country and are patriotic to the core, but differ honestly as to public policies; and the newspaper that teaches that all other parties are evil and enemies to their country, is a newspaper that is not fit for a farm boy to read. Avoid every book or paper that apparently loves to point out the evil in other men. That paper or book is itself evil, and the fact that it gloats over evil is the best of all the proofs of its unfitness for any healthy farm boy to read. I do not say that you should not read novels, but you have no time to read them now. When your mind is more matured, when you need recreation, you can read novels profitably, but not the blood and thunder variety nor the sentimental truck, but novels like those of Walter Scott and Charles Dickens that portray life as it is. At present stick closely to books and papers

that give you the facts which you need for your guidance in life. This letter, my dear boy, may seem like a sermon, but believe me, it is exactly what I would do if I were once more a farm boy.

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER VI.

THE FARM BOY AND HIS FUTURE BUSINESS.

My Dear Boy:

Next to selecting a wife, the most important step you will take in the next twenty years will be the selection of the means by which you are to earn your bread and butter. It is possible this may be chosen for you. You may be the only son, or the oldest son, may be thoroughly in love with farming, and be entirely content with the lot that has been cast for you. If so, I count you happy, very happy. If you will now but read and think and keep your eyes open, your ears also, and become a thoroughly up-to-date or a little-ahead-of-the-times farmer, while you may not get very rich, you will have a good chance to get as much real good out of life as any man I know.

It may be, however, that there are a good many of you, more than the farm will support; or it may be that you do not like farming, or that you have the town fever. You may have neighbors and neighbors' boys who think that farmers are an oppressed people, Ishmaelites, with every man's hand against them, and you may have taken up their notions; or you may really be better fitted by nature for something else than farming. In either case I want to have a square talk with you whether it does any good or not. To begin with, I do not think that all boys born on the farm should stay on it. There are too many of them. It will take fewer and fewer people to do the farming of the future, that is, in proportion to population —fewer and better farmers. The towns and cities need this over-plus of the farm.

There are two kinds of boys that other professions, and when I speak of the town I mean the members of all the other professions and lines of business which for the most part live in town, can use. These

kinds or classes of boys are, first, the really bright, thinking, progressive boys, strong in health, vigorous in mind, clear in thought, energetic in action, honest in purpose; and second, the young fellows who do not like the farm, who think that fortunes can be easily made in town, that town life is an easy life; who are not ambitious; who had a soft snap on their mother's breast when they came into the world, and have been looking for a soft snap ever since—born tired—possibly not their fault, who are willing to be hitched and unhitched like their father's horses. The town can use these on the streets, or in the factories and offices where the work is done by the day or hour, and but one thing is to be done, which becomes automatic after a while so that they can almost fall asleep and keep on doing it.

This last class is very apt to take the town fever. To them it seems high life, fine houses, nice lawns, lighted and paved streets, people well dressed, working in shady offices, crowds on the streets, bands

of music, pretty girls, churches, theaters, games, society, comfort. They do not know and can not be made to believe, except by experience, that every city has a White Chapel where vice reigns supreme and which no city in the world has been able to control fully, much less entirely suppress. They do not know the care-worn faces that look out of windows on the back streets, filled with failures, tailings, so to speak, that the town has hidden out of the way.

If you think, my dear boy, that town life is easier than country life, on the whole, or that it gives more average comfort, or that it has less care or requires less exertion, or that it makes better men on the average, then you are entirely mistaken. The farm boys that come to town and in ten, fifteen or twenty years live in those fine houses and run those large establish ments and shape the policies of the city and state, are of a different class of boys altogether. They are boys who learned to ride and shoot and tell the truth on the

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farm. The first gave them courage, the second accuracy and steadiness of purpose, and the third that integrity that lies at the basis of all success in life; in short, the qualities that make a man a success on the farm will make him a success in the city.

If you wish to choose some other profession or business, and I do not say that you should not, you should understand, first of all, that success can be won in none without indomitable energy, hard work, and a determination to succeed that can be baffled by no difficulty, and above all things else, without integrity of character. I wish to whisper in your ear that you can acquire these things better on the farm than you can anywhere else; therefore do not be in a hurry about choosing your profession. Your constant care should be to acquire those qualities that lie at the basis of success in any business that a man ought to follow; in other words, of any honest business. When you are rooted and grounded in these, it is entire-

ly safe to choose that business that suits your inclinations and that opens up naturally to you.

I am a great believer in Providence, by which I do not mean anything supernatural or special. I believe that every boy's life is a plan of God, and that if he acquires character, integrity or complete wholeness or soundness—that is, becomes what farmers call a straight up and down man—there will be an opening that will lead him into the line of business he ought to follow. I believe that if a man prepares himself by acquiring all the information possible, avoiding bad habits, bad company, and uses his time to the best advantage, matters will so shape themselves that he will find himself in the place where he of right belongs. Opportunities come right along to the man who is ready to use them. If the farm boy has acquired habits of industry, economy, truthfulness and uprightness, and his inclination leads him to be a preacher, lawyer, physician or business man, he

need not have the slightest fear of failure barring accidents and sickness, or an ill-fated marriage, if he will but take the first opening that points in the direction of his inclinations. Rest assured, however, that nothing worth having in this life ever comes without hard work, clear thinking and right living.

There are, perhaps, some boys on the farm who imagine there is some short cut to wealth; that dishonesty wins; that rogues prosper; and that it is little matter how you get money, or office, provided only you get it. This is about the worst mistake any boy can possibly make, and the boy who has that notion and does not get over it, can be very safely set down as a foreordained failure. There is nothing in this world that pays as large a dividend in the long run, as good old-fashioned honesty. I do not mean the corporation style of honesty. I mean old-fashioned uprightness, which is more than paying debts, and much more than telling the truth in form. It is doing the right thing

at the right time, in the right way, with every man, whether friend or foe, at all times and everywhere. There are not half enough of men imbued with this kind of uprightness to meet the demands. They are wanted in every great store, factory and bank, and it is this kind of men that in the end lead in all the professions. A farm is the best place in the world to grow them; therefore, do not be in a hurry to leave the farm, and do not make a final choice of your profession or business until you are sure you are doing the right thing. If you conclude to stay on the farm and be a really up-to-date farmer, I am sure that you will get the maximum of comfort. If you choose something else and succeed, you will, in all probability, after success has been achieved, want to go back to the farm. The most of the farm boys who have the town fever and come to town and fail, would get back if they could. Mind you, I do not say that you should not leave the farm, but do not be in a hurry to make up your mind.

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FARM BOY AND HIS FUN.

My Dear Boy:

I have written to you heretofore on the serious things of life, the matters that will affect directly your future usefulness, and the neglect or observance of which will do very much to make you a failure or success in life. I have said nothing about amusements, or as you say, "fun," and you may, perhaps, wonder whether your father and your Uncle Henry ever had any fun when they were boys. Your father, perhaps, does not say much to you about his boyhood. He is so much concerned in looking after his farm and stock that he says little to you about the fun he had when he was a boy, thinking perhaps it beneath the dignity of a grave, middle-aged and busy man. You sometimes won-

der whether he ever had a boy's life, whether he learned to dance, to shoot or skate, or play foot-ball; or whether he went to the show or circus. You can make up your mind that he went to the show, and, after looking at the wild animals hastily, took in the circus every chance he got, and that your grandfather went with him to see that no harm happened to him, and that your father might have been seen eating gingerbread and casting sheep's eyes at one of the prettiest girls in the neighborhood, who may now perhaps be your mother. Besides, he no doubt went 'coon hunting in August and September, went to corn huskings, perhaps was the captain at one of these ancient contests, and was on the lookout for red ears; and if you ask him he may tell you what that means. He went to apple-butter boilings, and to wood choppings when there was a quilting bee at the same house at the same time, and if a fiddler would even now strike up one of the old, simple melodies, I'll venture that you

would notice a far-away, reminiscent look in his eyes and his feet might even keep time to the long forgotten music.

If he did not go to all these things, your Uncle Henry did, and a right good time he had, particularly when it came to getting away with the nice things with which the tables groaned in those days. There was something particularly fine about the pies and cakes, fried chicken, sweet potatoes, doughnuts and apple dumplings. Sometimes I wonder whether women have forgotten how to make these things; and then again I wonder whether a boy's appetite does not account for the superiority of the old-time cooking. I presume the last is the correct solution. To be perfectly honest about it, I would rather go 'coon hunting even yet, than go to base ball or football, and if I heard the well known bark of the best 'coon dog in the neighborhood that showed a 'coon up a tree at midnight, I think I would get up at once and start after that 'coon a good deal more readily than I was accustomed to get up on a cold morning.

Your father, if he is the wise man I take him to be, wants you to have fun, not as the business of life, but as recreation; and your Uncle Henry regards fun, genuine, kindly fun, as essential to a boy's development as food, clothing, or education. In fact, amusement is education in the broadest, truest sense of the word; but it should be the spice of life and not the substantials; the pie and custard after the meal, and not the meal itself. There is, however, healthy and wholesome fun, and unhealthy and vicious fun. The one is life, the other is death. One develops true manhood, the other dwarfs it. The boy who learns to enjoy the right kind of fun when a boy, will enjoy it all his days; and the more genuine fun he has as a boy and man as the diversion of life, the longer he is likely to live and the better his life is likely to be. I expect to have fun, or diversion, all my days, and the longer I live the better I seem to enjoy it.

Now, as to these different kinds of fun. There is no real, genuine fun in anything

that is bad or vicious, nor is there any fun in anything you would be ashamed to have your mother know all about. There is no genuine fun in playing with a deck of greasy cards in the hay loft. If your mother approves of playing cards, do it in the sitting room; if she does not approve of it, do not play at all. I do not know one card from another, and I do not think I will lose anything if I never learn.

There is no genuine fun in inflicting needless pain on anything that lives. The fun that does a boy good nearly always involves some kind of physical exercise, and with that skill of a high order. Every boy should learn to shoot, to ride, to swim, to play ball where the games do not necessarily involve risk of life or limb, or an undue strain on some physical organ. I do not like some features of football; but it has, nevertheless, the essential feature of all good outdoor games, intense energy in action. That is what we all enjoy, whether in a horse race, dog fight, base ball or football, and the farm boy natur-

ally takes to amusements which require physical exercise rather than such games as chess and billiards, which require more delicate skill and calculation, and for the same reason that lambs and colts and calves and even pigs play—to develop their muscles. As we get older and the muscular system becomes fully developed, we care less for these exciting games and take our amusement in a quieter way.

Fun, however, is not all physical. Every farm boy should belong to a lyceum or literary, and should cultivate by way of amusement, not merely the intellectual side of his nature, but his sense of wit and humor. It will be a great help to every farm boy in after life if he will learn how to be a good story teller. Story tellers, we are quite well aware, are born and not made; so are orators and poets; but every boy who is not totally devoid of wit and humor, can learn to be a reasonably good story teller if he will but study and practice. I have always regretted that I failed to join a club while at college, which met

once a month for the sole purpose of practicing telling first-class stories. The man who can tell a clean story that sparkles with wit and humor is always a favorite. He is the life of every company. It makes success as a public speaker sure to begin with, and the ability to tell a first-class story or get off a real good joke, helps a man out of many difficulties all through life. A farm boy can have plenty of clean fun in learning how to tell a good story. In fact, I know of no better way

You will see, therefore, my dear boy, that your father and I want you to have lots of fun. There is no reason why your life should not have sport in it and plenty of it. You will be all the better for it both as boy and man. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy." Fun is not the end of life by any means, but it makes life better worth the living. Only let the fun be clean and wholesome, whether it be in the line of sports which develop strength of muscle, steadiness of aim, skill of hand, control of nerves, or whether

it be in games that require accurate calculation, or whether in telling stories or jokes. No right-minded boy will ever willingly listen to a vulgar, or even half-vulgar story, no matter how funny it may be. This is absolutely corrupting. There is no reason why a farm boy when he comes of age, should not have had twenty-one years of life as full of joy as can be experienced off the farm or on the farm in the twenty-one years that follow, provided always that he lives in a fairly good neighborhood. Even if he does not, he can get more real fun out of the colts and calves and pigs, and especially out of a first-class collie or other well bred dog, than the town boy can get out of all the sources of amusement that are at his disposal. After all, there is no place on earth where real genuine fun can be had so cheaply and so easily as on a well managed stock farm.

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FARM BOY AND HIS EDUCATION.

My Dear Boy:

You are, perhaps, growing restive on the farm. It has been the dream of your life to secure an education. You have envied the man who could talk well from the pulpit or platform; who could write for the newspapers; and you attributed this power to the fact that he had some time or other secured an education. You have heard it stated so often that an education is a fortune in itself, that could not be stolen or lost or burnt up, that you believe it, and think that your fortune would be made if you could secure an education. You have, perhaps, talked to your father about it and he has discouraged you. He has possibly said to you, as mine did to me over and over again, that an education

would unfit you for the farm; or perhaps, that he would like above all things to give you an education, but that an education is expensive, and that it is entirely beyond his power, consistent with his obligations to your brothers and sisters. You have talked with your mother about it, and she sympathizes with you, tells you she will do the best she can, perhaps cries over the fact that it is not in the power of the family to afford you this education. You have, perhaps, become discouraged over this state of affairs and concluded after all that there is nothing left for you but to plod along, make a living as best you can, crippled for life for want of an education which some of your chums are in a fair way to receive.

If so, you are taking a view of the subject entirely too dismal. There are three points I would like you to bear in mind: First, that there are hundreds, yes thousands, of graduates of colleges who would like to change places with you provided they had the money they have spent for

their education. They would use it to make a first payment on an "eighty" and stock it, and be content to be farmers all their days.

Second, that there are thousands of boys of your age that are now receiving an education who, when they graduate, will have contracted expensive habits and will be kicked around by practical business men like old shoes in the street, for the simple reason that their education has not taught them to do any one thing well.

Third, that a large per cent. of the men who are moulding and shaping the policies of the neighborhood, of the state, and of the nation, had no better opportunities for an education than lie clearly within your reach. They succeeded and you can, provided you have sufficient sand, or clear grit, to succeed.

First, I would like you to get a clear idea of what an education that is of any practical value, really is. It is not something that can be poured into you as you would pour water into a bucket. A

good many townspeople and some farmers talk about sending their children away to be educated, as they send the sugar box to the store to be filled. This cannot be done, no matter what time or money may be at hand. The human mind takes in knowledge as the plant takes up moisture, by free action from within, and grows, and is trained or educated by the act of appropriating knowledge. No teacher, no book, no school or college can educate you. You must educate yourself. You envy the town boy who has the opportunity of going to the high school where he can learn Latin and Greek, higher mathematics, geology, botany, and all that, without paying either board or tuition. You say that if you had that chance you would get an education. That depends on what sort of a boy you are. The education you would get in this, or any other, school would depend on how hungry you are for knowledge, how willing you are to apply yourself, and the natural strength of your mind. As a rule, I do not believe the

town boy who graduates from the high school is any better fitted for the duties of life than the country boy who graduates from a good country school at the corner of four sections. The town boy knows more things, perhaps, but the probability is that he does not know them any better and lacks the superabundant health, the keen, inquiring mind, and the practical knowledge that the farm boy must acquire on the farm if he is worth raising.

Before going any further, let me ask you if you have gotten all you can get out of the little white school house at the corner of the four sections? Have you mastered the three R's—readin', 'ritin', and 'rithmetic? Are you quite sure that you are thorough master of these? Can you solve all the problems that come up on the farm? Can you measure the different fields and tell how many acres are in them as accurately as your father can, who has plowed them for the last ten or fifteen years? Can you tell how many bushels of corn there are in the different cribs?

How many cubic feet of air there are in each room in the house? How many gallons the well or cistern will hold? Can you spell accurately and pronounce correctly? Can you punctuate? Can you write a legible hand, and read so as to convey to the hearer the sense of what you read? You can learn all these things at the country school, and if you can do all this, you can do more than some college graduates I know. If not, you had better take down your school books and master their contents so thoroughly that they will be like the iron in your blood.

Do not think for a moment that I undervalue an education. No one can well value it more highly than your Uncle Henry. It is the educated mind that rules the world, from the farm to the throne. I want you to have an education that will bring out the best that is in you, and I want you to get it yourself, the only way this kind of an education can ever be had; and the place to begin is with the three R's, and just where you are on the farm. If you are determined to have this

sort of an education, nothing can keep you from it. "Who wills, can." Until you give up yourself you can never be beaten in anything you undertake to do that can possibly be done. If you are, I had rather not say contented, but determined to be a farmer, which I hope you are, you can be a fine, well educated farmer, without any financial aid from anybody.

Devote the next year or two to mastering thoroughly the subjects taught in your common school. Get on good terms with the teacher whether you go to school or not, and get his, or her, help. Put your wits to work in gathering together enough money in the next year to give you one term at the Agricultural college of your state. Send for a catalogue, map out the studies that you intend to pursue, and keep your mind constantly at work in that direction. If you accomplish these two things in the next year, or two years, you will have made a first-class start in the direction of getting an education, and

when you go to school you will go with a first-class thirst for knowledge, with a determination to get it, and a clear idea of the value of every dollar. The boy who starts in in this way will "educate" twice as fast as the boy whose father sends him to be educated with plenty of spending money.

Meanwhile, do not neglect your reading, but be careful what you read. The habit of reading worthless books is not a virtue but a vice. The habit of skimming over good books is a vice of scarcely less magnitude. The man to be prized by friend and dreaded by foe is the man who reads few books, but those of the best, and reads them so that he not merely knows all they contain, but catches their spirit.

Whether you are to be a farmer or a professional man, give close attention to farm problems. One of the worst humbugs of the day is the idea that prevails among educated men that a knowledge of the dead languages is very important, if not essential, to the training, or

education, of the mind. That their study gives this training is true. They act as a grindstone to sharpen the mind; but the problems on the farm, the question of the movement of the water in the soil, the structure of the plant, the methods of digestion and assimilation of food by live stock, the detection of diseases among plants and animals, and the best methods of prevention and cure, furnish the material for just as good a grindstone upon which to sharpen your mind, as the language that some people used who have been dead about two thousand years. Education, after all, is simply the fitting of the eye to see, of the hand to work, of the mind to perceive truth, of the tongue or pen to express it; and it is by the practice of all these that we educate ourselves and become strong, true men. You will see, therefore, that education is not a bonanza given to the rich; that it is something that can not be cornered like grain on the market; that it is something of which the man can not be deprived who has the deter-

mination to get it, and that the share of the education which any man can receive under any circumstances, is determined mainly by two things: his natural endowments and his determination to develop them. Neither money, nor schools, nor teachers, nor position, nor anything else can make a strong man out of a boy who has not the brains to begin with, or who has not the thirst for knowledge and the determination to get it. If you have these you will get the education, no matter how far off it may seem now. If you do not have them, nothing in this world can give you a real education.

It will help you a good deal if you will from time to time inquire into the history of men that are making things go about their way in state and nation. Many of these men never saw the inside of a college, of an academy, or a high school. They had no more money with which to obtain an education than you have. They do not now have what the world would call an education, but they have the real ed-

ucation, the development of the mind, the power that the real education gives; and that is what you are after, or should be; and having that you have everything. What you need is to be thoroughly waked up. I have had many teachers in the course of my life, some of them drill masters and grad-grinds who pounded a lot of knowledge into me which was of no particular use then, or ever afterwards; and others who filled me with boundless enthusiasm; who set before me a high ideal intellectually and morally; and the latter are the only profitable teachers I ever had. This is precisely what I am trying to do for you. If I can thoroughly awaken you to the fact that there is but one life before you, that you must make the very best out of the talent nature has given you, must "hitch your wagon to a star," if you want to get along, I shall have done what I started out to do in writing these letters; and if you take my advice, you will thank me to your dying day.

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER IX.

THE FARM BOY AND HIS START IN LIFE.

My Dear Boy:

You have no doubt from time to time, heard your father or your mother, or both, say that if they could only live to see their children well started in life, they would be entirely satisfied. For this they cheerfully toil, save and endure hardships and privations that come to all of us sooner or later. They are not so particular as to what business or profession their children may adopt. They would prefer to have them become farmers and farmer's wives, and settle somewhere near them; for to the parents the children are children long after the grandchildren come. While they would prefer, as a rule, that their children should be farmers, they will not object to one or more of them

engaging in business. Many mothers would like to have one of their sons become a preacher; and every mother would like to see her daughters married to men of good character and well-to-do. This is what they mean by "a start in life."

If you keep your ears open when talking to farmers who have not succeeded well, you will frequently hear them say that the trouble with them was that they never had "a start." Other men have succeeded because they had a start. Some lay the blame for not having a start to being born poor; others to ill-health; others to a sickly wife or children; and a few are honest enough to admit that they spent their best years in sowing wild oats and are now reaping the harvest. They have evidently given up the hope of ever doing more than making some sort of a living, for the reason that they failed to get a good start at the right time. If you will get on as intimate terms as you can with the men who have made a success of farming, (and I advise you on general prin-

ciples to do this,) some of these men may tell you how it was that they got their start while others failed. You will be surprised if you get down into the history of the lives of successful men to learn how few of them ever got a start in the way of money being given to them by relatives. You will find in almost every case that these successful men made their own start; and where they did not make their own start, they were thoroughly, and, as they thought at the time, severely trained by parents who knew from their own experience some things which I will try to tell you in this letter.

The point I wish to impress upon your mind first, is that this getting a start is one of the most important things in your life. You came into this world, if I recollect right, about eighteen or twenty years ago. Time has been pushing you on right along. It has never stopped a minute for you to think what you will do. It will never stop until it pushes you through to the other world. It gives you one chance,

and only one. By this I mean that you have but one life to live, and if you are to make a success in life, you must start right. If you fail in this, while you may redeem yourself to a greater or less extent, you will never be the man that your mother and father hope you will be, or that your Creator intended you to be. As time will not stop for you to think, you had better do a good deal of solid thinking while your time is going on, as to how you can make the right kind of a start in life. You will never in all your life spend time more profitably.

In the first place, I want you to rid yourself entirely of the idea that a start in life means only the accumulation by inheritance, by gift, by trickery of one kind or another, or even by honest work, of enough money to set you up in business. More or less money is essential to a successful start in life; but after all it is not the start, even when earned by your own hands and brain. It is the evidence that the start has been made, but it is not by

any means the start. Most farm boys think that if they had a thousand dollars, or even five hundred, they would be well started. They say, "It takes money to make money;" and while there is some truth in this, it is not by any means the whole truth. The real start in life does not consist in what a man has, but what he is; and the value of a money start is not in the money at all, but in the qualities of body, mind and heart that have been developed in making that money honestly. The boy who is shrewd enough and dishonest enough to make a thousand dollars by the time he is twenty-five years old, by sharp practice, by overreaching, or by gambling on the Board of Trade, may think he has made a good start. Some of his neighbors may think so, too. His father and mother may be foolishly proud of him; but I want to tell you that he has made a start the wrong way, and it were a thousand times better for him if he had saved a hundred dollars in that time by honest work and careful economy. In the

last forty years your Uncle Henry has seen a good many young men make that kind of a start, and to-day he can not think of one of them who is not either scratching a poor man's head, or has failed to retain the confidence of those who know him.

If you are to succeed you must get a start of the right kind, and you cannot get that without a good deal of hard work, close economy, and more or less of self-sacrifice. You will have to work, and you will have to think, and you will have to do without a good many things which at the first blush you would like to have. I will first tell you about some ways in which you will not get a start. You will not get the right kind of a start by going in debt for a courting buggy, to spend your evenings in going to dances, circuses, etc., with some good looking girl, who, if she would speak out, does not value you above one of her hairpins, who eats your caramels and ice cream, thinking, if she thinks about you at all, that you are a silly goose

for wasting your substance in that kind of entertainment. She more than half suspects that the buggy is not paid for, she knows you are wearing more stylish clothes than you can afford, and she secretly makes up her mind that while she will have all the fun she can with you, she will say "Yes" to an entirely different sort of a fellow.

You will not get a start in life by forming the bad habit of smoking or chewing, or drinking beer and an occasional glass of whisky, nor by having "a high old time" when you go to Chicago with a carload of your father's cattle.

You will not get a very good start in life by imagining that, being raised on the farm, you therefore know all about farming, concluding that books and papers that discuss farm problems are not worth your notice.

No matter what business you may choose, there are three or four things that you must have if you are to start right in life.

You must have a capacity for steady, endless, hard work. There is no honest business or profession in life in which this is not a prime requisite and an absolute condition of success.

You must think as well as work. It takes more than hard work to win. It is hard, intelligent work, where the thinking brain guides the hand, working according to a well defined purpose. My father used to say to me: "Henry, if you don't think, it makes very little difference whether you work or not." That was sound advice fifty years ago; it is sounder advice to-day than it was then.

Getting a start in life means being absolutely honest. I do not mean by honesty merely the willingness to pay debts. That is a part of honesty, but a small part. I mean uprightness, integrity, reliability, truthfulness. I mean that quality embraced in all these words that will lead your neighbors and all who have any business with you, to rely absolutely upon you, with the utmost confidence that you will do what

you say you will do, and that you can be depended upon under any circumstances; or, in the expressive language of the farm, you "will do to tie to."

Now, the value of the first thousand dollars you may earn, is not in the money, but in the training that making it in an honest way will give you along these lines. Therefore, start out to make this thousand dollars, commencing with five, ten, fifty, one hundred, or five hundred dollars earned by yourself, by your own unaided efforts, digging it out as the miner digs the gold out of the Klondyke. There will not be so much trouble in the making of it as in the saving, in avoiding the spending of it for useless things, and in putting it at interest as fast as made; or better still, investing it in young stock to which you will give your personal care, and thus learn to feed and breed, to buy and sell. It is astonishing how fast a young man on the farm who has a kind and wise father, can accumulate money in this way, and with it the qualities of mind

and heart and hand that make the real start in life, no matter what the future profession may be. When these qualities have once been acquired, the amount of money that has been accumulated in acquiring them is really a secondary matter. Any farm boy who has been well born—by well born I mean has come of good, honest, respectable parents, whether they have much of this world's goods or little—who has fairly good health, and such education as a common school can give, can acquire them if he will; and if he does not, he has no one to blame but himself. He must, however, bend every energy to its requisition. He should not think too much about the girls until he has made a start. The good ones of them will keep. He must avoid acquiring expensive habits, and diligently school himself to hard work, clear thinking and honest living.

In every department of life, whether manufacturing, merchandising, or railroading, the patrons of every profession are looking for boys who have that kind of a

start. If you go into any city, large or small, in this broad land, you will find that the men who are running things had that kind of a start, and got it themselves. Boys who have that kind of a start do not need to do much advertising. True manhood has a ring to it which all worthy men recognize, and that ring can not be counterfeited successfully. There is no place where a start of that kind can be obtained as well as on the farm. Having secured the money part of the start, the farm boy can spend it in obtaining an education in college, or in the particular branch of business, or the particular profession which he chooses to follow; and barring sickness, accident, or an unwise marriage, nothing can prevent him from making a success in life. He may not become a millionaire. A few, but only a few, really honest men do. He may not rise to a high political position, and yet he may; for after all, honesty is the best politics, although few professional politicians seem to think so; but he will secure

the confidence of all who have to do with him, all this world's goods that he really needs, and more too; and when time pushes him out of the world, as it does all of us, he will have left the world a good deal better than he found it, which at last is the highest measure of success.

This is the kind of a man I wish you to become. It is in your power, when you start out resolutely, to make this start, or live to regret in after years that you did not take the advice of your

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER X.

THE FARM BOY AND HIS HABITS.

My Dear Boy:

When you and I were quite small we had a great difficulty in learning to walk. We first crept, then with great effort we learned to stand alone by a chair, then to take a single step, then two or three in succession. Our mothers encouraged us to make longer ventures, and by and by we learned to walk across the floor, falling down, perhaps, two or three times; and when we succeeded we felt that it was the proudest day of our lives. Every step at the beginning required a distinct effort of the will, of which we were then conscious, but it was not long until we walked without conscious thought or movement. In other words, it walked itself. We had acquired the habit of walking.

It took us a long time and much conscious effort to learn to talk. First, we managed the easy words of one or two syllables, then of three, and by and by, with much toil and pains, we managed the big words, and the w's, v's and the h's. We were quite proud of ourselves, and our parents were prouder still of us, when we learned to talk, or rather, when it learned to talk itself; and the only trouble they had for some years afterwards was that we talked entirely too much. We had formed the habit of talking.

It took you and me a long time to learn to read. We had first to learn the name of one letter, and then of another, with their appropriate sounds, and then combine the letters and sounds, so that we did well when we could make out one word at a time. We formed the habit of doing this, and now we can read faster than we can make the sounds. Some people have learned, not merely to take in a word at a time, but a sentence; and can skim over the pages of a book, and get the sense of

it, in a way that those who have not learned to do so, can scarcely understand. At least, I can not. They have formed the habit.

When you were in my office last, you noticed how very rapidly the stenographer handled the keys of the machine. It would be slow work for you and me, but if we had formed the habit it would do itself. It was slow work for the stenographer to learn to take down talk in shorthand, but it became so easy for a man I once employed, that it required no thought at all; and on a hot day he would go to sleep taking it down, and I used to have waken him. He had formed the habit.

For several months of my life I had to take down speeches and lectures in longhand, and I got into the habit of leaving out nearly all the vowels in writing, and part of the consonants. Since then I have written a hand that few can read. I get to thinking, and the pen wiggles—that is all; and often I cannot read it myself, unless I know what I am writing about—a very bad habit.

I have given you these illustrations of the power and force of habit for a distinct purpose. You and I are simply bundles of habits. Every time we do anything it becomes easier to do it in the future, until by and by the doing of it becomes unconscious, automatic—it does itself. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that we form correct habits in doing, in thinking, in living. If we learn to do a thing badly and form the habit, we will in all probability do it badly all our days. If we form the habit of doing things wrong, and if we form the habit of doing bad things, we will in time become bad men; for badness and goodness are, to a certain extent, at least, matters of habit.

When your Uncle Henry was a boy, he was very anxious to get over a great deal of work. For instance, he was anxious to be the fastest corn husker and the fastest grain binder in the neighborhood. Unfortunately, he formed the habit of binding sheaves loosely, and failed to acquire the habit of getting all the silk and husks off

the corn. The mice had a picnic in the corn that he husked. A loose sheaf when hauled in, or out at threshing time, was instantly recognized as one of "Henry's sheaves." I tried hard to correct this habit in after years, but never succeeded. I could bind tightly enough as long as I kept thinking about it; but the moment I began thinking about something else, and that was about all the time, the sheaf bound itself loose.

You will avoid a great deal of trouble in after life if you will acquire the habit of doing whatever you do, well. It takes no longer to acquire the habit of doing it right than wrong, and when a habit is once formed, it stays formed; and the longer you practice it, the more firmly the habit becomes fixed. It is just as easy to curry the horse well, when you get in the habit of it, as it is to give him a "lick and a promise." It is just as easy to milk the cow clean, and with neatness and dispatch, as it is to milk her otherwise; and the habit once formed of doing things right,

will stay with you as a perpetual heritage and blessing. The habit of doing things right can be formed by the conscious doing of them in the first place, and every subsequent repetition of the act fixes and confirms the habit until it becomes the permanent habit of life. The man who learns to do the work on the farm right, will be very likely to do all his work right, for the reason that it becomes second nature.

I need not say to you that you are very foolish if you acquire what are ordinarily called "bad habits," which are usually regarded as habits of doing wrong or useless things, and not the habit of doing right and useful things in the wrong way. A boy is foolish to acquire habits which involve expense or injury to his health, or waste his time and money. There are weights enough to be borne in life without taking on extra loads and binding them to our backs by the silken, yet unbreakable, cords of habit.

Mental and moral habits are even more

important than physical. You will be greatly helped in forming right moral habits, and continuing therein, if your father and mother have in your earliest childhood thoroughly instructed you in the first principles of right and wrong; have taught you to do right because it is eternally right, and taught you to avoid doing wrong because it is everlastingly wrong; and that while there may be palliation of the guilt of wrong doing, there can never, under any circumstances, be a good excuse for it. If you are fortunate enough to have this kind of early teaching, and take to it, it will be comparatively easy to form right mental habits.

You will be much more likely to adopt these elementary principles of righteousness if you have righteous blood behind you, and unlikely if you have bad blood coursing in your veins. For, though some affect not to believe it, it is a truth as old as Moses, and in fact, very much older, that the iniquities of the fathers (and mothers, too,) are visited upon the chil-

dren to the third and fourth generation of them that hate the Lord, and mercy shown to a thousand generations of them that love Him and keep His commandments.

Some good people do not like this text because they do not understand it. It is to me of great interest to know that in three or four generations inherited evil may be overcome by the right kind of training, and that when overcome, a righteous character may be perpetuated under the right kind of training for an indefinite period.

You will readily understand, therefore, that the formation of mental and moral habits is about the most important thing in your life. For example, you may form the habit of seeing things clearly and distinctly, and stating them truthfully; or you may form the habit of half seeing, and stating them loosely. Do you know that as a matter of fact there are comparatively few persons that can tell the truth, that is, state things precisely as they are?

They are not conscious liars, not liars at all in the obnoxious sense, but nevertheless we cannot depend upon what they say, because we know they are not in the habit of seeing things as they are, or of stating in exact language what they do see. There is no habit of more value to a young man, whether on the farm or off it, than to be able to discern truth, fact, reality, and to state it as he sees it, without exaggeration or being influenced by his hopes, his fears, his dislikes, or his prejudices. The farm boy has a better chance to practice in this line than any other class of boys. He should train himself to know by observation the weight of the steer or calf, the size of the field, the distance from one point to another, the yield per acre of the crops grown, and the color and form of every particular animal on the farm. The shepherd, by his close powers of observation, can tell each particular sheep if there are five hundred in the flock, and detect at a glance over the flock which one is missing. The

farm boy can do the same if he but will.

Next to the habit of seeing things as they are, is stating them, or telling the truth, a habit that can be acquired only by careful and long continued practice, and which, when once acquired, will do more to win the confidence of men than almost any other one trait of character.

Still more important, if anything, is the cultivation of the habit of right-doing. It is almost as easy to do right as wrong, if one but acquires the habit of it. Habits of right-feeling precede habits of right doing. The thoroughly good man does right without thinking about it, or talking about it, or taking any credit whatever for it to himself, because he has formed the habit of it. It becomes part of his nature. It would hurt him to do anything else, because it is the breaking up of the habits of his life, a sort of rupture of the fibers of his being.

If you will think a moment, you will see that it would not be possible for this world to run anyways smoothly in any

other way than by making men bundles of habits, thus giving permanency to character. You know that your father will be about the same sort of a man to-morrow, next week, or next year, that he was yesterday, or last week, or last year; that there will be little or no change in his walk, in his talking, in his modes of thinking, and manner of meeting whatever problems come up on the farm. He will be out of humor with the same sort of things, and be pleased with the same sort. He will like the same sort of people he has liked for years, and will dislike the same sort. It will be the same with your mother, and with all your neighbors. Business men, politicians, preachers and teachers, all who have to do with men, count on this general permanency of character, the result of fixed habits, based on fixed principles. If it were otherwise, it would be impossible to do business, or to get along at all comfortably with each other; and society, politics, church affairs, and everything else would be in total confusion.

Getting acquainted with men is simply taking stock of their habits, and we are greatly surprised when some friend develops a trait of character which we never saw before, because we had never become acquainted with that particular habit in the bundle. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that you form the right sort habits, and do it when you can. The older you become, the harder it will be to form good habits and to break up bad habits.

You are yet young. You can form the habit of doing that which your own conscience tells you is the right thing to do; that for which there is no necessity of making any excuse; that of which your mother and father approve, and of which your own sense of right approves, and of which the Ruler of this world approves. It is not as easy to do this as to do the other thing, for there is more or less weakness and inherent wickedness in the best of men; but the constant doing of it will so fix the habit that when you go out

to take your place in the world, you will never seriously think of doing anything else, nor will the world expect anything else of you. It is in this way that men become strong and form characters on which the weak will lean for guidance and direction. If you are in doubt about the propriety of doing any thing, do not do it. "He that doubteth is damned;" that is, condemned, or reproved, by his own sense of right or conscience.

You will see, my dear boy, that I have not given you a lecture, nor preached a sermon, but simply pointed out certain facts that you should know. It is not a question as to whether you will form habits or not. Form habits you will; you can not help that. It is simply a question whether you will form right habits or wrong ones; which means, whether you will be a man that "will do to tie to," or not; whether, in short, this life, the only one you have to live in this world, is to be a success or failure.

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER XI.

THE FARM BOY FROM HOME.

My Dear Boy:

I do not wonder that you sometimes become restless and want to get away from the farm for a day or two. I, too, felt that way. From the beginning of spring wheat sowing to the end of corn husking, is a long time for a boy to work hard, day and night, with no vacation except the Fourth of July.

Time flies after a man has passed fifty, but it limps along very slowly with a boy under twenty. Work on the farm, although much easier than it was when I was a boy, is not after all the very easiest kind of work, and if continued right along without interruption, becomes very monotonous. The hours of work are long in the summer, the nights short. We get

tired looking day after day, and month after month at the same horizon, which seems to close down on us and shut us in all around, knowing all the while that there is a great world beyond, throbbing and palpitating with human hopes and ambitions. We long to see something of it and share in its abundant life. At least I did. I know you do.

Valuable as is the drill of farm work in forming habits of steady, persistent industry, the boy needs once in a while to get away from home, to see something of what the papers tell about, and to measure himself with other boys, and be measured by them. If a bright boy, he is apt, if kept always at home, to become a conceited fellow with vast conceptions of his abilities in one direction or another, and, if he is to be of any account in the world, needs to have this conceit completely knocked out of him. The farm boy who is first in the common school is very likely to get what, in common parlance, we expressively term "the big head," and should have

a chance to meet some one who has forgotten more than he ever knew. The neighborhood bully should be encouraged to meet some one who will take the swagger and insolence out of him with one swift blow, coming like a clap of thunder out of a clear sky. The boy who has fallen into careless habits of speech or behavior should have a chance to see how well bred boys conduct themselves, while the modest and diffident boy should have a chance to learn that an honest heart and a clear head with country manners are like gold—current the world over at full weight, with or without polish.

The behavior of the farm boy away from home furnishes an excellent means of judging what sort of a boy he is, what sort of folks his parents are, and in what kind of a neighborhood he was brought up, or at least, the kind of associates he has. When I see a number of farm boys going home from the state fair, or any other public gathering, noisy, profane, and evidently aiming to attract public

attention, I am not surprised if I notice a bottle of liquor circulating among them, and I infer that they have seen but little of the world, and that little not by any means the best part of it. I expect, of course, that when a farm boy goes away from home he will be somewhat like a colt that has been kept in the stable and needs exercise. I expect him to have a good time and to enjoy it; but I also know that, now that he is off his guard, I can form a good deal better judgment of what he is, and what he is likely to be, than if I met him on the farm, and under his parents' eye. I like the boy that likes fun. I like it myself, and better in my old days than when I was young; but there is no real fun in any behavior that is loud; that has neither wit nor humor in it, but more or less of obscenity or profanity. I like to see farm boys, when away from home, take an interest in base ball and football, and take part in these games, if they are stout enough to do it without danger. Such fun is natural, and as

healthy as for colts to run, or for lambs to play. A boy that is fair in games will likely be fair in business; and conversely. I have always suspected the genuineness of the Christianity of a certain preacher who once tried to cheat me in playing croquet. The boy, who, when away from home, wants to see the seamy side of the city, or to "paint the town red," or to have what he calls "a high old time," serves notice on all men that he has poor stuff in him, and is likely to make a poor use of it.

Other farm boys when away from home reveal the fact that they are insufferably vain and conceited, and need to be taken down severely a peg or two. These are not bad boys. They simply overestimate their good looks, or their smartness, or, perhaps, their father's wealth or social position. Living in the narrow circle of the neighborhood, they get an enormously exaggerated idea of their own importance, and make themselves the laughing stock of sensible people. If they have

sense enough to see this and get down from their pedestal, they will come out all right; and it is often an excellent thing for a boy to get away from home and be laughed at and ridiculed, and made to feel cheap and mean. The medicine is hard to take, but it is good for you. You will not get it unless you need it. The next time you get away you will not dress nor act so as to attract attention. You will slip along quietly like the rest of us common folks, and will, as a result, get the good will of the plain, common sense sort of people who are really the only sort that can be of any help to you. Let me give you a hint: Whether away from home or at home, dress and act so that you will attract as little notice as possible. Leave off that glaring necktie, and the hat that is either too broad or too narrow in the rim. Do not push yourself into public notice, and do not hide away. Face the world boldly and modestly, do not force your own opinions upon people, and do not hesitate to express them modestly,

but firmly, when called upon, and the outside world will henceforth consider you a boy of good sense, and the making of a strong man.

A good many farm boys are entirely too modest and diffident when away from home, and particularly so if they are thrown among noted men, or men and women who have seen much of the world. They then become painfully self-conscious. Their dress does not seem to fit as they thought it did when they left home. They lose their natural manner and become stiff and awkward, especially when in the society of refined and cultivated ladies. They are at a loss as to what to do with their hands and feet. This is a very painful experience. Do not fret because you step high while other men seem to glide along. You are accustomed to walking over rough surfaces; they over carpets. Do not feel badly because you speak loudly. You have to speak loudly out of doors on the farm; they speak to people in the house. The

sensible man understands all this and thinks none the less of the boy for acting naturally and farm like.

Do you know that business men of all sorts are constantly looking out for just this sort of boys? They always suspect the farm boy, who, when away from home, tries to ape the manners of the town boy, or who shows traces of foppery. In the eyes of sensible men in the city, country manners are always at a premium. You may not know, but I do, that successful men everywhere like well bred, modest boys, and will always encourage and push them to the front as far and as fast at it is safe. Most of them were farm boys themselves, remember their own early trials. and take genuine pleasure in giving a helping hand to these young fellows who come to the city to push their fortunes, or who push them on the farm.

I can point out middle-aged bankers who will loan money to a boy, when, if the father came, they would have no money to lend. They see clear through

country manners to the real stuff underneath, and take pleasure in helping the farm boy with a clean life, resolute will, and unstained honor. There is one man now gone over to the other world, whose memory I revere. He invited me with other boys, to take tea and spend the evening. His wife was city bred, stylish, and vain. I was fresh from the farm, awkward, and very plainly dressed. She lectured me on my lack of taste in dress and refinement in manner. He overheard it, and said: "Henry, you will find it much easier to put her advice in practice if you stick closely to your studies, get the foundation first, and be thorough in all your work. Your dress and manners then will come all right. Make yourself worth polishing, and the polish will come as you rub up against men."

While self-conceit and self-assertion should be repressed in the farm boy, he should at the same time know the full value of his powers and learn to rely on them. Getting away from home and min-

gling with the very best sort of people will teach you how to take your measure. Low bred fellows, physical and intellectual bullies, and small souls who are constantly in fear lest some one surpasses them, will try to intimidate you by ridiculing, by browbeating or bulldozing you; but when you strike a true man he will be your friend. It will do you no good to associate with snobs and upstarts. If you get a good, honest, manly and intelligent face on you, which you can get only by being an honest, manly and thoughtful farm boy, you do not need any certificate of character or letter of recommendation from anybody. You will find that the very highest people in the whole land are the most easily approached, and the most ready and willing to help a modest, thoroughly upright and self-reliant farm boy. I have the honor to be personally acquainted with many of the great men of the nation, and I find that the greater the man, the easier it is to approach him. It was much easier to reach General Grant

during the war than the petty officers who waited on him. President McKinley is a much more approachable man than many of the little popinjays who want to be county officers, or to be elected to the legislature. You would feel much easier in talking with the members of his cabinet than with many of the little snipes who hold clerkships in the various departments.

Get away from home if you can, and when away mix with the very best people within your reach. Keep out of the noisy, boisterous crowd. Let the prigs admire their own excellencies. Do not hesitate to mix with the best men much older than yourself. You need never be afraid or ill at ease with a really great man. If you are of the right sort to begin with, they will be glad to talk with you. If the best men give you the cold shoulder, there must be something wrong with you. What is it?

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER XII.

ABOUT THE HARDUP FAMILY.

My Dear Boy:

I fear I have given you more good advice in previous letters than you will take. I suspect you have not read all of them very carefully. You may have the idea that it is natural and right for a boy to have his fun, and perhaps sow a little wild oats, and have a good time generally until he is married, and then will be the time to settle down. Your father and mother have read these letters, and perhaps urged you to read them carefully. They may, indeed, have urged you a little more than was prudent. I find nothing does a boy good unless he relishes it; and unless you have a taste for good advice, and take to it naturally, it will, very likely, be wasted. For this reason I propose hereafter to

give you illustrations rather than advice, and will tell you something about farm boys who have failed, and failed for the reason that they have not taken advice similar to that which I have given you.

When a man has lived over sixty years, and been a close observer of farm boys, mingling with them for nearly fifty of these years, he acquires a very large acquaintance, and can group his acquaintances into a great many large classes. I propose to tell you this time about a very large and respectable class of farm boys under the general name of Hardups.

The Hardups are a very old family, their pedigree tracing back through the revolutionary period, and quite a number of them came over in the Mayflower. In my trips abroad I find that they are a large family on the other side, and in looking up their pedigree, I have found that they antedate the oldest names in the English peerage, and in fact trace to that period "of which the memory of man runneth not back to the contrary."

A large number of them came West before and after I did. I have kept my eye on a few, and have had many pleasant and profitable talks with them. Many of them are eminently respectable people, and some of them are among my warmest personal friends, of whom I may speak freely, provided I don't tell where they live.

For example, there is my friend, Ben Hardup, as good a fellow as ever lived, true to his friends, open hearted, generous, loyal to his party, devoted to his church, and true to his name, Hardup. I knew his father before him, his brothers and sisters, his cousins and his aunts, and they were all of a piece—"the easy-going Hardups," we used to call them. They were good livers. I shall never forget a remark that Ben's father made to me one time at supper, when I asked him how it was that he was able to live so much better than many of his neighbors. He was carving a fat tnrkey at the time, and he stopped, looked at me with mock severity,

and said, "Henry, I want you to understand that neither I nor any of my boys, will ever die in debt to his stomach." That particular branch of the family, at least, never did, wherever I have known them.

I warned Ben when he came West not to settle in the timber, as I have warned you not to do certain things. He did the precise thing which I warned him not to do. I hope you will not follow his example. It was a very natural mistake that Ben made. He said to himself, as he told me the other day when I spent a pleasant evening with him, that the way he looked at it was this: that the prairie lands of this great state would never be settled up. He told me that just as he left the East he dreamed that, in moving West, when he came to the top of a hill, the left back wheel of his wagon came off, and that before him there lay a beautiful stream with timber growing along its banks, a log cabin and a fertile prairie for miles on eaeh side. The dream was fulfilled when

he actually began his journey, and there lay the landscape he had seen in his vision; and when he had repaired his wagon he called on the owner of the cabin and and bought that quarter.

He was one hundred and fifty miles from a railroad. He said to himself: "Here is timber, shelter, good land and pasture that would have made Jacob weep if Esau had squatted on it. What more do I want?" In less than five years from that time the railroad came, and with it settlers jumping over each other to enter land, and he was shut up to his timber land, which he has been grubbing out ever since. "I do not mind," said he, "the hard work it has cost me and my boys to prepare fields, when, had I gone out a few miles, I could have had much better lands at government price, in which I could have plowed the length and breadth of a quarter without striking a stone or a stump; but there are a lot of folks settled along this timber, with some of whom I do not care to have my boys and girls as-

sociate, and I must get out of this as soon as possible if I am to have a happy and peaceful old age."

His brother Sam went out on the prairie and Ben furnished him firewood free for five years. He built a temporary house, and prairie stable, broke up his land by piecemeal, and finally got it all under cultivation, and along early in the sixties had the misfortune to have a great wheat crop and sell it at a long price. This awakened his dormant ambition. He thought he must have more land, and bought an adjacent quarter, giving a mortgage on both. The next year the wheat crop failed and the price went down. Bob Cheatem, the son of a broker of the firm of Ketchem & Cheatem, whose acquaintance Sam made in coming West, and who had a large flock of diseased sheep on his hands, taken in on a mortgage, called to revive old acquaintance with him, and incidentally persuaded him to go into sheep. Sam knew nothing about sheep, but yielded to Bob's persuasive eloquence,

which he describes as follows: "You see, Sam, wool is worth a dollar a pound, and every ewe will shear eight pounds each year, and give you two good lambs. The lambs are worth five dollars apiece, and there is eighteen dollars for keeping one sheep a year, and you can keep six of them on an acre." Sam bought the sheep and millions of scab mites with them, and foot rot to boot; and in less than a year he sold all that remained of his flock for a dollar a head, and was glad to get rid of them at that. Bob had a second mortgage on the farm, and a chattel mortgage on everything not exempt from execution. Poor Sam has been working from that day to this, year in and year out, to get rid of that mortgage given for Bob's sheep.

The trouble with Sam was that life had been too easy with him in boyhood, and a little prosperity made him dizzy, as it has made many another man. He had never really studied farming, and when misfortune came, he grasped, like a drowning man, at a straw, was easily the dupe of

a designing scoundrel, and went into a department of farming of which he had no knowledge whatever.

I count his boys more fortunate than he. They are experiencing misfortune when they are young; but if they have grit enough not to be disgusted with farming, and sense enough to look around and see that other farmers prosper who follow out the right lines, they may one day make the name of Hardup a misnomer in their case.

Their brother Jim was a fortunate fellow. He married a bright, snappy little wife, with eyes that could blaze like coals of fire, or make a fellow's heart go pitty-pat when she looked at him lovingly (I used to see her home from singing school occasionally), and she took Jim in hand, and made him, as they say, "toe the mark." I knew she would do that. There was no sleeping until after sunrise in that house. Jim had to work and she managed, and it is a joke in the neighborhood, that when a man wants a little money, he is

directed to go to Jim Hardup. Whatever mistakes the rest made, Jim made none when he married. Had he married one of the clinging-ivy sort that say, "Not as I will, but as you please," Jim would have been as hard up as any of the Hardups, and his boys would have lacked the grit and snap that make their name a misnomer and a standing joke. Ben's boys and Sam's are renters; some of them hired hands. Jim's boys own their own farms. Moral: If you are ever inclined to be easy-going, do not be afraid to cultivate the acquaintance of the girl that has more get-up and snap than you have; it may be the life of you, young man, and I think it will.

The Hardups, however, do not all live in the country. I know plenty of them in town. Some are chronically hard up because they have made mistakes in the past and cannot help it. I pity them, as I do every man that has been unfortunate, through his own fault or not. Some are financially hard up for the time being, because of sickness or other misfor-

tunes. Some, because they have been too honest, and scorned to take an advantage that would have made them rich. Others, because they have had too much faith in human nature, and have been the victims of scoundrels like Bob Cheatem, who live by studying the weak points of their fellow-beings, winning their confidence and robbing them under the forms of law. Many a fine house stands on a corner lot on a fashionable street in the city, built with money which was never earned by the owner, but stolen under forms of law from the men who earned it; and these men now, if properly named, would be be called "Hardup."

I shall never forget the look that came on Sam Hardup's face, when, in passing through his county seat we came to Bob Cheatem's broker office, miscalled "bank," and saw his fine horses and carriage, with the liveried coachman, standing by the curbstone. He stopped and pointing with quivering finger, said, "There is the scoundrel that has made me and mine poor.

May 'his wife be a widow, and his children fatherless.' " I was about to rebuke him when it occurred to me that he was quoting from one of David's psalms. As we passed on he said: "Henry, you will have to excuse me this time, but nothing but the so-called cursing psalms meet that man's case; and I think it was to describe just such scoundrels as he that they were written. He owned those scabby sheep, and in pretending to give good advice to a friend in trouble, made him poor for life. 'Let his iniquity return upon his own head.' "

And I said, "Amen."

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER XIII.

ABOUT THE RICHMAN FAMILY.

My Dear Boy:

I told you in my last letter about some of the misfortunes that befell various typical members of the Hardup family. Whether they are true to type or not, you can very easily find out by observing various members of that interesting family within the range of even your limited acquaintance. You may possibly be interested in some mistakes that have been made by various typical members of another family equally ancient and honorable—the Richmans. The Richmans are not nearly so numerous as the Hardups. For some reason there are comparatively few of them. Abe Lincoln used to say that he thought the Lord must like the Hardups best, or he would not have made

so many of them. For some reason the Richmans have, usually, small families; and the more exclusive and aristocratic they become, the fewer children they seem to have.

They are a very old family. We read in Bible times of one, Solomon Richman. If he had not had plenty of money, I suppose he would have gone by the name of "Sol." He knew a lot more than any man of the family that I ever heard of. He was regarded as the wisest man of that day; and yet in his old days, in looking back over his past, he seemed to put very little store on his money, saying in effect, that the piling up of money was vanity and vexation of spirit, for the reason that no man could tell whether his boy would be a wise man or a fool, or words to that effect; that the man who gave himself up solely to piling up money never knew who was going to spend it, and that the very best thing a boy or man could do, was to fear God and keep his commandments. In this opinion I con-

cur. He did a great many foolish things, but, taking all in all, I regard him as the smartest specimem of the Richman family I ever heard of, and I advise you to read his book on the conduct of life, which is generally known by the name of "Proverbs."

I was reading only last night of a member of the family who died a few days ago in England. He began life poor, was the son of a coal miner, and had scarcely enough to live on the first years of his life. He went to school at night, lost his father in early youth, but became one of the greatest men England ever produced, dying at the ripe old age of ninety-two, and as cheerful in his last days as a boy of twenty.

While this family numbers some of the very best people the world has ever known, it numbers a lot of very great scoundrels. There seems to be something wrong with the breed. They are not like the Hardups, an even lot; and it is somewhat notorious that their boys seldom

turn out as well as those of the Hardups, and their girls are very liable to make poor matches. I suppose this is why they are such an uneven lot.

One of my earliest friends was Colonel Alexander Richman. He was a farmer, and got his title, not by service in the army, but as colonel of the militia. He was a very good farmer, indeed, one of best I have ever known, and being a good business man as well as farmer, reading the agricultural papers of that day very closely, watching the markets, and keeping his credit away above par, he made a lot of money. He branched out into matters outside the farm, and for many years made money hand over fist without oppressing anybody, or taking a mean advantage. His word was as good as a government bond. When his boys got hold of the business, backed as they were by their father's unlimited credit, it spread out, so to speak, all over creation, with the result that in a few years the entire credit of the family was no greater

than that of the poorest Hardup in the neighborhood, and their cash not much greater in amount.

I knew his brother John well. He was a well-to-do farmer, had two hundred acres of land of the best, with the finest improvements, a fine brick house, large and commodious barns, a great orchard, every field fenced hog tight, and every thing else to match. He had an only son named Robert. His mother died when he was a baby, and he was brought up by two maiden aunts, in whose eyes nothing was too good for Robert. He slept late in the morning, had an elegant pony to ride, fine clothes, and all that. None of the neighbors' girls were good enough for him, and he married a lady of reputed wealth a long way from home, who knew nothing of farm life, and he had to keep two girls to wait on her. When the new wife came the aunts paid dearly for their indulgence of Robert, and left, calling him an ungrateful wretch. In a few years a young Hardup, who was getting on in

the world, took in by sheriff's deed the last forty of Robert's magnificent inheritance. Robert moved to town, and died a wreck.

A distant relative of this same family moved West. His mother, so the tradition among the old folks goes, had a fancy for odd names, and she called him Graybel. He was known among the boys as "Grabe." and rather well liked. He had none of the aristocratic airs that characterized the other members of the family. In fact, he became quite popular in school. His father was one of the best of the connection, and, in trying to uphold their credit with his own, failed, and young Graybel moved West, starting in the world poor. He worked late and early, never went in debt, lived poorly, and married a thoroughly good, quiet sort of a wife, of whom he, as well as his children, subsequently made a slave. When he got a little money ahead through working, scraping and saving, he loaned it to his neighbors at anywhere from two to five

per cent. a month, a thing not unusual in those early days, and took cut-throat chattel mortgages, iron-bound, copper-bottomed, and warranted to hold anything except a man's life in his body. As his wealth increased he loaned to his neighbors who owned real estate, but were a little behind-hand, on the same sort of ironclad mortgages, making all payments due and payable on default of the principal or interest of the first payment, and foreclosed on the first opportunity. He became wealthy rapidly. The love of money took complete possession of his entire being. The demon of avarice took an ironclad mortgage on the entire family, except his patient and long-suffering wife, who was charitable to the extent to which she could carry on her benefactions in secret —a limited extent in that family.

Father and sons worked together with one mind and purpose, drove hard bargains, bought stock, land and grain at the very lowest prices which their owners were compelled by their hard necessities

to accept, prying constantly into the business of their neighbors to see how soon, and to what extent, they could put on the screws. On week days they wore the coarsest clothes, and it was often remarked on the quiet that but one of the boys was ever seen at church at a time, the old man never, and that the same suit of clothes seemed to fit all the men of that family. Finally the wife and mother died from sheer overwork and exposure. Her last remark was: "I am so tired—so t-i-r-e-d."

In less than a year a second wife appeared on the scene, but she did not linger long. She was smart, ambitious, fairly well educated, liked to dress in good taste but not extravagantly, had a temper of her own, and a tongue that could cut like a razor without even raising the tone of her voice. Long before this happened the neighbors had changed the name of Graybel to Grab All. There was some quiet talk in the neighborhood when Grab All Richman had his hair dyed, put down

new carpets, got a good suit of clothes, and a fine new buggy; but before the hair dye had disappeared, and long before the carpets or buggy were worn out, there was a first-class sensation in the circuit court in the shape of a divorce suit, in which Grab All Richman was defendant and his wife plaintiff, and a decree for alimony which required the sale of two good farms to satisfy. This broke the old man's heart, and he died in the winter. Before the grass grew in the spring on the sod which covered his grave, the sons were at swords' points over the division of the estate, and there was a public washing of soiled linen that disgusted the entire neighborhood.

You will not live many years, nor become acquainted in very many neighborhoods until you find families and individuals that approximate to this type of the Richman family, though I hope you will not meet any which this description entirely fits. I draw the picture that you may learn how to shape your life so that

its ending will not have the faintest likeness to that which I have drawn.

The Richmans, however, do not all live in the country. Very few of them, in fact, do, the atmosphere of the city being much more congenial to their aristocratic tastes, and city conditions much more favorable to the gratification of the chief ambition of most of them, that of making money, or rather of transferring money from the pockets of other people to their own. I was walking along one of the fashionable streets of one of the largest American cities recently, with my friend, Silas Richman, who, by the way, is a bit of a philosopher. He called my attention to a number of his relatives and connections, who were driving along in the fashionable boulevard with their fine teams driven by liveried coachmen, and said: "Please note the lines of care and anxiety written on the faces of those men, and contrast them with the happy-go-lucky air of the people who are walking on this street. I have studied this matter closely for a number

of years, and have always found that the fellows who bear heavy burdens ride in that style, while the men with light hearts, happy countenances, and free from care, and who have real enjoyment in life, walk. I used to train in that crowd. I made in twenty years over three-quarters of a million dollars. I have lost $725,000 of it, and my health besides, and I am just beginning to realize what a consummate fool I was, and what consummate fools are those relations of mine. In 1893 I had $830,000. good value. I knew I did not need any more, but I took the foolish notion into my head that I must be able to truthfully call myself a millionaire. I made large investments and involved myself in debt in order to make that other $170,000 at one bold, Napoleonic stroke. I had paid insurance for twenty-five years, and never lost a cent; but just at the wrong time one building took fire on which I had foolishly allowed the insurance to lapse two weeks before, and it swept away $130,000. In a month another came and

swept away $64,000 more. This shook my credit, and I was obliged to sell property at a sacrifice. I had built a residence costing me $90,000; spent $21,000 in furnishing it; had fine teams and carriages, and was starting out in great style. When one piece of misfortune after another came, I began to realize my folly, and figured that I could board myself and family in comfort for the taxes and interest I was paying on my establishment. I want to say to you now, that the last year, when I have been living sensibly as a common sort of a man, has been the happiest year of my life.

"I was no greater fool than the rest of them are yet. Look, for instance, at my cousin George. He was reputed worth $40,000,000. He died suddenly last week, a comparatively young man. When he is "cut up," that is, his estate is divided, it will probably be found to be less than $10,000,000. His sons are drunkards, and unless he has cut them off, which I suspect he has, with a life annuity, his property will go to the dogs.

"His brother Charles is reputed worth twenty millions, and is probably worth eight; has been once in the penitentiary, and twice bankrupt. Each of these men has incidentally rendered great service to the public while getting rich, but they are hated and despised because of their avarice and greed. Charles told me, only last night, that if he was as bad a man as people thought he was, he would drown himself before morning. The fact is that fate, perhaps you would call it Providence, makes out of their avarice, greed and ambition, whips and goads to compel the Richmans to carry out great enterprises of which the public receives the benefit, and for which they get the curses. As for me, I am gathering up what is left of the wreck of my fortune, the result of my foolish ambition, and I propose to take what comfort I can in this world while I am left in it, and regain my health if I can."

I would not have you believe that all the Richmans are of the types that I have

sketched. Many members of this family are among the best people that I have ever known. The trouble with them is that they do not run evenly, and have not a clear, well-defined moral type. If they were all good men this world would be a great deal better world than it is.

I like to see men make money, and plenty of it, honestly. I like to see farmers, merchants, and all sorts and conditions of men, who follow honest callings and use honest means, get on in the world. Capital is essential to the proper couduct of the world's business, and is one of the best friends the poor man has when handled by honest men. I hope you will be a rich man some day, even if your name is not Richman; but I could not wish you a worse fate than will befall you if you set before yourself money, profit, wealth, as the end to be desired above all other things, and at the expense of honor, manliness and character.

When this passion for getting money in any way possible, but GETTING IT, takes

hold of a boy or man, it is sure death by strangulation to every noble purpose, and every instinct, even, that distinguishes man from the swine he feeds. It renders him false to his associates—true friends he can have none—cruel to his family and to his hired hand. He must of necessity be a harsh and cruel husband; a father whom his sons and daughters may fear, but can never love as children should love their parents. Those whom he has wronged, hate him; those who know him best, necessarily despise him; and his memory, like that of the wicked, shall rot.

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE HARDMAN FAMILY.

My Dear Boy:

When I was a farm boy we had in our neighborhood a representative of the Hardman family. I supposed in my innocence that this was about all of that family or class there were in existence; but I have since learned, and so will you, that they are a large family, very widely scattered all over the world, and quite ancient, if not quite honorable. Even as a boy I noticed that one of the peculiarities of this family was that no one really liked them, or even pretended to like them, unless he had something to gain by it, or fear from them, if he failed to pretend to like them.

I could never discover that old Jakie (no one never called him Mister) Hardman, had a true friend. I could never

discern that his boys had any affection for him, and, judging from the way his daughters ran away with worthless scamps, I took it that fear and not love, ruled in that home.

After I left home and met with other members of the Hardman tribe, I discovered several other peculiarities. One was in their choice of lines of business or profession. I never knew one of them to become a doctor, preacher, or professor in a college, and seldom one a school teacher, and he for not more than one or two terms. I have known a few of them to become lawyers, but always in connection with some other line of business, such as note-shaving, or real estate. I never knew as much as one of them to be an editor, but one or two were business managers of newspapers—for a time. I never knew one of them to be a candidate for congress, or the state legislature. I have known a number that were members of city councils, and quite a number who were assessors in the city, but never one in the country,

Another peculiar feature of the Hardmans is that they do not generally believe in any education beyond the "three R's," readin,' 'ritin' and 'rithmetic. I have known, among the hundreds that I have met, a few that were fairly good farmers, none that were fairly up-to-date; but as a rule they got rich and made more money than the up-to-date farmers, not, however, by farming, but by trading, and by loaning money at the very highest rate of interest, and on cut-throat mortgages.

Perhaps the best way to give you an insight into the Hardman character is to tell you the story of Tom Hardman. He was not a bad boy, as I remember him, and had the sympathy of most of us, because we knew he had a hard time of it at home. He was worked hard; driven like a slave, in fact, from the time school closed in March, until the beginning of the winter term in December. He was, however, naturally bright, and picked up knowledge quite readily. He was a sharp trader even then, and the boy who swapped

knives or caps with Tom Hardman always got the worst of it. The worst thing I knew about him in those days, was his disposition to knuckle to the big boys when he ought to have resented their insults, and his tyranny over the small boys who had no big brothers to take their part, two things, which, in my observation, always go together in boy and man. He ran away from home at the age of fifteen, and later I had made the acquaintance of large numbers of the Hardman family, I was all the more anxious to learn Tom's history.

On my last trip abroad I noticed on the passenger list the name of Thomas Hardman, Esq., and was glad to learn, on introducing myself, that he was none other than my old schoolmate. An ocean steamer furnishes one of the best opportunities to study human nature and find out what men really think on all important subjects. Passengers are completely cut off from the outside world for a week or ten days. There are no letters, telegrams,

no press of business, nothing whatever to do but to be seasick, eat, sleep, look out for whales and icebergs, and tell stories to kill time. There is more or less of an element of danger to all, which draws people close together and makes them willing to reveal their true character. Neither Tom nor I were seasick, and after we had traced out the history of each of the old boys and girls in detail, we began to unfold our own experiences. He was not free to talk about himself at first. I felt my way gradually by talking about matters of current history, such as the probable working of the "Wilson bill" then going into effect; then on partisan politics, literature, manufactures, and finally on agriculture. I told him of my own hopes and ambitions in the line of newspaper work; that my aim was to develop the agriculture of the nation, and especially of the West; to aid in developing a class of farmers mightier than Cæsar's legions, more invincible than Cromwell's Ironsides, the stay of the country in war, its

balance wheel in peace when other classes lose their heads; and that I wished so to live and work that when I was dead and gone my name would be remembered by thousands as a man who had left the world better than he found it.

He finally said to me on the last day of the voyage: "Henry, you have been a fool all your days. You had it in you to make money and plenty of it; but you have chosen instead to run on a fool's errand by trying to help other people. I have heard of your doings from time to time. I know more about you than you think, and what I say to your face I have said dozens of times behind your back. You are a fool. I have no doubt you have helped many, or at least you think you have. You have also loaned money on poor security, and you have been too chicken-hearted to put the screws down hard and realize on what security you had. You have let women cry you out of forcing collections, and they have laughed at you behind your back. What do these

people care for you or yours? You have helped men into place and power, and they have kicked you; you have given scoundrels your confidence, and they have betrayed it, and slandered and abused you in order to make themselves believe that they owed you nothing.

"I have done nothing of the kind. You and I are as wide apart as the poles. You believe in a God; I do not. You believe there is a future; I do not. You believe there is a right and wrong; I do not. You believe there is such a thing as sin; I do not. If there is a sin, it is that of perpetuating the race in such a cursed world as this. You started out to look after other people and to teach them how to fit themselves for another world; I started out to look after number one, which means ME, MYSELF, and I have DONE IT.

"I ran away from home, as you know. Why I did it you know. My father never loved me, and I never loved him. There was no love between my father and mother, brothers and sisters. Love of

every kind is a fool's dream; modesty is hypocrisy; humility, cowardice. I hired out to a farmer out West at $200 a year and board. I drew enough to live on, never over $50 a year, and often much less, and I took his note at ten per cent. per annum for the rest, and then loaned him the interest. I did this for ten years. The tenth year he had hard luck. His crops failed, his hogs died of cholera, and his cows aborted. Times were hard, neither the banks nor loan companies were advancing money, and I foreclosed and took the farm subject to a mortgage of $2,000 which cut out the homestead rights and his wife's dower. I farmed and he hired out.

"My credit was now established. I could borrow when, and as much as, I wanted to. I quit work, rented the farm for cash rent with an ironclad lease, and collected every cent, although it took all the fool fellow had and left the judgment still unsatisfied, which made him my slave for a year or two more. I looked out for

lame ducks and took them in, and made money hand over fist.

"I soon got tired of skinning grangers. They squeal when they are skinned, and so do the neighbors. They have a lot of old fogy notions in the country. They think the Ten Commandments are binding, and that Christ talked business in his Sermon on the Mount. At thirty-five I was worth $20,000. I shook the dust of the country from my feet and came to the city. I came in on the Wabash. The train was detained by wrecks—a freight wreck in front, one behind, and one on a branch line, and we had to wait half a day. I fell in with the master mechanic of the shops in the city, and we got to talking about Jay Gould's management of his railroads. He told me that Gould managed to borrow, or get proxies for enough of stock to elect him president, and he then in various ways decreased the revenues by large salaries, by improvements, by diverting traffic to other roads, until he run the stock away down, and bought in

as much as possible. Shrewd men were afraid to own stock in anything that Jay Gould controlled, and he took advantage of his own rascality. When he got a large amount of it in, he began building up the road by reversing his methods, and sold out to suckers. He thus milked the public into his own bucket. I said to myself, Why cannot I do this on a small scale? The first thing I did was to find a corporation lawyer after my own heart, and agree to give him a slice on the sly. He was well acquainted in the city, and we looked out for prosperous corporations and found one who would sell enough stock to give me a controlling interest by voting with one faction or the other. We then made our deal for directors with the side that was the more easily deceived. When we got control we put up salaries, wiped out the surplus, made no dividends, and rendered the stock worthless to the minority. If suits were brought my legal friend, whom I employed to tell me, not what the law was, but how I could evade it, de-

murred, delayed, postponed and worried the other side until they sold me their stock for a song. I soon found that I could swipe in a hundred dollars in the the city quicker than I could ten in the country. The best thing of all is that city men do not squeal. Their code of ethics is the commercial, not the moral. Their motto is 'dog eat dog,' and hence in the city dogs are respectable. If a man attends a fashionable church, and is good pay, he can do about as he pleases. If the preacher has old fogy notions, and talks about old-fashioned morality, he soon gets a sore throat, or his wife needs a change of climate. It is not so in the country. The stupid granger looked on my proffered donations as 'the price of a dog,' or 'the hire of a prostitute,' quoted Scripture, and said Tom Hardman was trying to buy his way into heaven with the wages of unrighteousness. The city is the place for me. There is ten dollars to be had by looting corporations, to one by skinning grangers."

"Do you mean to tell me," said I, "that there is no relief in a corporation for minority stockholders? I myself am a minority stockholder in a newspaper corporation, and there is trouble ahead with the majority."

"None, whatever, unless you can prove the most glaring fraud. The majority can defraud all they please if they have the right kind of a lawyer. He can file motions for more explicit statements; can move to strike out part of the pleadings, or divide, and thus secure delay; he can then demur, postpone, appeal, ask for new trials, and prolong litigation for ten years, until the property is entirely eaten up in salaries and expenses. The danger of being caught in fraud in a corporation never troubles me. I never give it a moment's thought."

I looked at him in amazement and replied: "Tom, this is the first time we have met for forty years. It will, in all probability, be the last. I will not put in words what I think of you and your methods.

They are not new. They are as old as the Egyptian bondage. They are the methods of scoundrels in all ages. They have ruined, not men merely, but nations and civilizations. The Prophet Micah described just such scoundrels as you when he wrote:

'Woe to them that devise iniquity,—and work evil upon their beds:
When the morning is light, they practice it,
Because it is in the power of their hand.
And they covet fields, and take them by violence;
And houses, and take them away:
So they oppress a man and his house,—even a man and his heritage.'

"He described you to a dot when he said:

'Who hate the good, and love the evil;
Who pluck off their skin from off them,—and their flesh from off their bones;
Who also eat the flesh of my people,—and flay their skin from off them;
And they break their bones,—and chop them in pieces, as for the pot.'

"It is men like you that are corrupting the very foundations of public morality, and fast bringing about the same condition of things which the prophet described when he said:

'The princes * * * * * * * * * * *
* * * abhor judgment, and pervert all equity.
They build up Zion with blood,—and Jerusalem with iniquity.
The heads thereof judge for reward,—and the priests thereof teach for hire,
And the prophets thereof divine for money:'

"You are a typical Hardman, not only in name and nature, but altogether the meanest, lowest, and most dangerous that I have ever met; and notwithstanding all your disbelief in a future or a God, or the worth of this present life, if this ship were to strike a rock and begin to sink, you would be the first man to push the women and children out of the life boat in order to save your worthless carcass."

You will, my dear boy, in the future meet with many of this family. You will not find many as totally destitute of all human feeling and sense of honor as this one. I wish, however, to put you on your guard against the whole tribe, for when a man hardens himself against right, and uses his full power to oppress, whether his motive be the love of money, or the love of power, it is only a question of

time, opportunity and ability when he will fill out the full measure of the iniquity of Tom Hardman. It is only a question of time when the man who abandons the moral code which has made this nation great, and gives himself over to the teachings of commercial morality, current to some extent in the country, and more largely in the city, will become a moral wreck, deserving of the scorn and contempt of all men who love their country or their race.

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER XV.

"COMMERCIAL MORALITY."

My Dear Boy:

In my last letter I quoted Tom Hardman as believing in what he called "commercial morality." This may possibly be a new term to you and need explanation. You have probably assumed that there is but one kind of morality, that which is taught in the Sabbath-school and from the pulpit, is based on the teachings of Moses and the prophets, and finds its best statement and application in the Sermon on the Mount. Before you have any very large experience in the world, you will discover that there is another morality, practiced but not preached, that pervades very largely the business of the nations, of our own nation, and particularly of the large cities, to no little extent of the coun-

try, and, to some extent, of your own particular neighborhood. No pulpit proclaims it, no Sabbath-school teacher mentions it, no newspaper advocates it, no individual avows it until he has reached a point when he feels it safe to defy public opinion. With this exception, the only men who are the avowed believers in this commercial morality are common thieves, confidence men, gamblers in common gambling houses, gamblers on the boards of trade, and such other professions as are under the ban of public opinion. The most common hypocrisy practiced in these modern days is that of professing to believe in Christian morality, and yet in business practicing commercial morality, and making atonement or compensation by liberal contributions, obtained by practice of the opposite, in support of the teachers of Christian morality.

To make this plain, let me say that Christianity assumes that there is a possible right and wrong in every business transaction; that the moral law governs

there, as elsewhere; that there can be no separation of business from morals, and that a fair and just trade is as pleasing to the Almighty as a church contribution, a prayer, or a sermon. If the Bible does not teach this in its every page, directly or indirectly, I confess I have never been able to understand its meaning. Commercial morality, on the other hand, assumes that business is one thing, benevolence another; or, to put it in the tersest possible terms, business is business; by which bad men mean that business has no connection whatever with morals or religion. Good men frequently use the term with an entirely different meaning, namely, that business should be conducted on well established business principles. Now, the truth is, that while business should be conducted on the principles which human experience for ages has proved to be correct, none the less will a business conducted on these principles prove to be one of the highest forms of benevolence, in that it will encourage thrift, self-control, integ-

rity, and furnish reliable and steady employment to the thousands that are not capable of conducting, on their own account, large business enterprises. While business is not religion, nevertheless it furnishes the best possible sphere for the practice of the basic principles of all religion, taught in every pulpit in Christian lands. If we divorce business from religion, we cut the very foundation from under all the civilization that the world has yet achieved that is worth retaining.

The danger to the farm boy is, that he may adopt the maxims which I have quoted above in their bad sense, instead of in their true and proper sense; and it is only a question of time, opportunity and circumstances, when, if he should do so, he will develop a character of which Tom Hardman is an extreme, but by no means an uncommon, type. The foundation of all dishonest business is in buying a thing for less than it is worth. Every thoroughly honest trade gives a full equivalent for the value received. I wish you to get this

idea clearly in mind. Honest dealing consists in buying things for what they are worth, as determined by the supply and demand; dishonest dealing consists in getting in some way the advantage, and buying for less than they are worth. Every trade on its face purports to be the exchange of goods, or goods for money, as of equal value, or as a full equivalent. You say: How is it possible for men to make money, or profit by trading, if in every honest deal a full equivalent is given? The answer is easy and can best be given by way of illustration. Your father raises corn. He grows more than the family, or the stock on the farm, can consume, or than he desires to keep for an advanced price. He sells this corn at its market value on the date of sale as determined by the supply and demand in great markets. He can not use or keep it to advantage. He therefore sells it to the man who has use use for it, either to feed to his stock, or to ship to a distant market at carload rates, which are always less

than rates on part of a carload. While a full equivalent is rendered, your father is the gainer, because he has disposed of something for which he had no present use. The money that he receives for it is of more value to him than the corn, while the corn is of more value to the buyer than the money; hence, both profit by this strictly honest trade.

Your father grows live stock as a means of disposing to better advantage the products of his farm. When it is finished he can not use it to advantage. It has gained all that it can profitably. He ships it to the nearest stock market and sells it to the packer. Your father can use the money to much better advantage than he could the live stock; the packer can use the live stock to much much better advantage than he could the money; hence, each profits by the transaction, for each has disposed of an article for which he has no present use,—your father, the live stock; the packer, the money.

Your father wishes to buy live stock to consume his grain, but does not have the money; the banker has. He gives his note for six months at six or eight per cent. interest, figuring that after paying the interest, and paying himself market price for the corn, and a reasonable price for the grass that it will take to fatten the stock, he will have more left than will pay the interest on the note. The banker has more money than he needs and he loans it for the interest it will bring. The banker puts the money to work for him in the way of bringing in interest; your father puts the money to work in condensing his crops for market; hence, each is a gainer by the transaction, and neither would enter into it unless he had reason to believe he would be the gainer. Each has rendered to the other a full equivalent, and by reason of their different circumstances and conditions, each makes a profit. The same law applies in all kinds of legitimate business. A full equivalent is rendered in every case with the prospect of possi-

ble and probable profit to both parties in the transaction. All such transactions are in accordance with Christian morality.

Men who are guided by commercial morality act from entirely different methods. The idea of getting either something for nothing, or much for little, is the prevailing motive with them. For example, the manufacturers of any line of goods form a trust. They close up factories, dismiss labor, limit production, and advance the price, the object being to secure from every consumer something more than the article is really worth, or for which it can be produced. They think they CAN do it, and proceed to do it without the slightest regard to the rights of labor, or to the real cost of production, and on the theory, which is the essence of savagery and barbarism, that MIGHT makes RIGHT. The robber barons of the Middle Ages who occupied commanding positions on the great highways of travel, levied blackmail on all comers and goers BECAUSE THEY COULD. Their legitimate suc-

cessors are the robber trusts of the nineteenth century, who take a few cents from this man, and a few dollars from that, simply because they CAN, or THINK they can. This is commercial morality.

The railroads have a large amount of what is known as watered stock; that is, certificates of stock issued without the value of the face of the stock being expended in constructing the road. In other words, it was issued without consideration. In order to secure dividends on this watered stock, they have been forming combinations for the last twenty or thirty years, agreeing to advance and maintain rates and compel the public to pay the increase. The only justification made for this is that they CAN. We find, when we get down to the very truth, that the basis of all modern rate-making, is "what the traffic will bear;" that is, what the public can be forced to pay. This is commercial morality,—the morality of the robber baron of the Middle Ages, the morality of the thief and the robber. I CAN; there-

fore, I WILL. Or, as Rob Roy puts it: Let him take who WILL, and keep who CAN.

Corporations of all kinds take kindly to commercial morality. A corporation is an artificial person. It is made up of stockholders who own shares, and it exempts the shareholder from any personal liability beyond the value of his shares. Its life is limited to the years prescribed in the charter by the law, but provides for a renewal indefinitely, and a majority vote of the shareholders governs. It is thus endowed with practical immortality. Death, that cuts short the robberies of the individual, spares the corporation. It has no soul to be saved, or to be lost, and hence is very likely to ignore all moral precepts, all idea of responsibility to a higher Power, and very gradually develops among men who have much to do with corporations, what is known as a "corporate conscience"—a conscience that has no regard for moral law, and but little regard for human law. For it is a curious fact

that a man who repudiates moral obligations has little respect for legal obligations. The more experienced he becomes the less respect he has, owing to the fact that he finds out how easy it is to evade legal penalties by methods which I have in a previous letter described. Many men, in fact, have two consciences,—a corporate conscience, and an individual. As members of a corporation, they will do things, apparently with a clear conscience, which they would absolutely scorn to do in the transaction of their private business. In the one case commercial morality, or the morality of the thief and the robber, governs; in their private business Christian morality governs until the greater immediate gain to be made by corporation methods blunts the Christian conscience, and they become business hypocrites, professing one thing, and practicing the opposite. Hence, in large cities business is becoming largely "dog eat dog," the men in one line of business waiting patiently until sharpness of competition results in

the failure of a competitor, and then they all pounce on the crippled man and devour his substance, much as a pack of wolves stop in their chase to devour one that has been shot by the pursued.

I was sitting, one evening, on deck of a steamer on the Pacific, as the cooks were clearing off the tables and throwing the scraps out of the porthole into the ocean. Dozens of white gulls were following in the wake of the ship, and dropping down and devouring the bucketfuls of scraps as they were thrown out on the waves. One large, gray gull, of an entirely different species, followed along leisurely, and just as the white gulls began to devour the coveted morsels, dropped down amongst them and scooped everything into his capacious crop. He kept this up for an hour, and I marveled at that bird's capacity, and said to myself: "There is a type of business life; that scoundrel waits until the gulls have located the food and had a taste, when he swoops down and takes in the bulk of it." By sheer force of power

he was the robber of the sea, and a fine illustration of a class of men who are governed only by commercial morality.

Nor is the country exempt from the operations of men guided only by commercial morality. The horse jockey is, perhaps, the best type,—a type, however, so well known by honest men, that he is never trusted by farmers. They never believe what a horse jockey tells them. They, perhaps, have never stated the reason to themselves, but it is because he is guided by commercial morality. They do not believe him even when he is not trading horses. They are right in this, for a man who learns to deceive in one line, will soon learn to deceive in all. A more respectable type, but more dangerous, is the broker who calls himself a banker and extorts usury, anywhere from one to five per cent. a month, because he CAN, When I hear farmers say that such a broker, or so-called banker, is not "in business for his health," I know exactly what they mean.

A still more dangerous type is that of the respectable farmer who practices the broker's methods. He has money to lend, not to the best farmers, but to the worst, whenever their hard necessities compel them to pay extortionate interest. This scoundrel often creates necessities by urging men to borrow, when he knows that borrowing must lead to loss, extending credit to an unreasonable limit, and when he finds the borrower in a tight place by reason of crop failures, or other misfortunes, puts on the screws and demands immediate payment; and in default, forecloses, bankrupting the borrower. Another example is that of the landlord who uses all the power given him by a landlord's lien, either to bankrupt the renter completely, or to hold a judgment over him in such a way as to make him his slave for years to come, and all because the law gives him the POWER, which he mistakes for the RIGHT.

I have thus far spoken of men who practice commercial morality with a set

purpose for gain. I would not do justice to a large class of business men, were I to fail to state that many of them are compelled, in a manner, to practice commercial morality, or go out of business. Let me illustrate: A large store in the city, for example, that repudiates Moses and the Sermon on the Mount, and believes thoroughly, in a bad sense, that "business is business," offers for sale, at a low price, goods that have been dishonestly made by contract, possibly in sweat shops, or in factories where shoddy displaces honest material, and where workmanship is cheap and poor. This class of stores sets the pace which honest men must follow, or go out of business, at least until commercial morality is so far educated out of buyers that they lose their mania for buying bargains. Until this is done, the dishonest element in business will set the pace which honest men must follow, or quit. These dishonest dealers compete with each other in the race of securing cheaper and more worthless goods, by

cheapening material, lowering the price of labor, forcing honest, but poor, laborers into pauperism, and honest and skilled laborers to accept the wages of the unskilled, thus degrading labor, demoralizing business, debauching the public morals, and transforming us into a nation of adulterators, money-grabbers, bargain-seekers, and all that, until the problem of how to be an honest merchant, and practice the Sermon on the Mount on week days while professing it on Sabbath, is one of the most difficult problems of human experience. I seldom hear a lady boasting of how cheap she bought a dress or bonnet, without thinking of the poorly paid woman who made that bonnet. Lazarus must work cheap, beg, or starve, in order that Dives may fare sumptuously every day. The trouble is that the mania for cheapness, the craze for the bargain counter, pervades the city and country alike; and when we come to the last analysis, it is closely related to the gambler's mania of getting something for nothing.

I did not intend to moralize in this way, but it is better that you should understand before entering on active work some of the difficulties and perplexities with which the business man must grapple if he intends to be a thoroughly honest man.

It is a very healthy sign that in nearly all country communities men who follow these practices are more or less under the ban of public opinion, an opinion not always expressed, but felt. One of the highest compliments that farming communities pay to themselves, is the high honor in which they hold farmers and business men of all classes who do business on principles of the highest honor. When a man sends a carload of hogs or cattle, to the dealer at the station in the full confidence that whether the market of the day before be up or down, he will get the full value without a previous contract, he pays him about as high honor as one man can well pay another, and we have noticed that dealers who treat farmers in this spirit are almost uniformly men who make money.

In all dealings of man with man, the confidence of the customer is the most valuable asset of the dealer. It is something that cannot be taxed, or destroyed by fire, or by flood; cannot be measured by dollars, but is gradually coined into dollars as we transform the rain, the sunshine, the electric currents, and the fertility of the soil into crops. There can be no confidence, whatever, reposed in the man or corporation that is guided only by commercial morality. It is death to manhood, death to legitimate business, death to every noble feeling and aspiration, and were it generally practiced, or even nearly so, it would be death to the civilization of the nineteenth century. It is under the condemnation of every law of God; it is under the ban of all good men; it is civilized savagery and business barbarism; at least, so believes your

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE BRODHEAD FAMILY.

My Dear Boy:

When I was your age, although I had been very well instructed in the doctrine of "total depravity" as a theological proposition, I did not believe that such men as Bob Cheatem and Tom Hardman had any real existence in country places. I thought they belonged to the city. I thought the doctrine of "total depravity" as a theological proposition, had to be modified in a great many ways to make it conform to the facts of existence. I had never heard of "commercial morality," but a great deal of the morality taught from the pulpit and in the home. I was taught that while, as an abstract principle, men were totally depraved, and sinned as soon as they were born, if not before, or at

least, as soon as they were able, nevertheless, it was but just and fair that men should prove themselves bad before I had a right to treat them as bad men. It has cost me a good deal of money and grief to learn that I was mistaken in some things, and to discover that, even amidst country surroundings, among farmers and farm boys, types of the characters I have mentioned were possible and actual. I have painted these pictures for you because I have undertaken to furnish you sketches from life that you may recognize as correct, or at least approximately so, in your own county, in any county, in any state, and in any land. You ought to know something of the world of men with whom you must soon deal, and "forewarned is forearmed." If I were to stop painting these pictures now, I would give you an entirely wrong conception of human nature. The good people, not wholly good, but people who are trying to live right lives and deal on honor, as in the sight of God, with their fellow-men,

outnumber vastly those who are parasites on society; not merely parasites, but foes to all that is good, and who are, by their crooked methods, sapping the very foundations of our civilization.

I shall not be able to find time to tell you of the scores and scores of nobler types of farm boys who are now making this nation great,—the Brodheads, the Goodmans, the Wisemans, the Faithfuls, and dozens of other similar types that are well worth sketching. When I come to study the better class of farmers, and the business men of the great cities who have grown up on the farm, whose lives have been fashioned on farm models, the number of pictures that rise before me is so great that it embarrasses me to make the selection, and I find it impossible to find time or space to describe them all. They are not all perfect—none of them are. I hold it true that there is not "a just man upon earth;" that is, an absolutely just man, "that doeth good" always and everywhere, and "sinneth not," nor makes

a mistake. I would do wrong if I were to describe such. The beauty and power of the Scriptures rest largely upon the fact that they describe actual men and not perfect saints. I always take delight in reading that story of Moses when he, grown up in the court, the companion of princes, got mad and killed the Egyptian who was imposing on one of his poor and oppressed brethren. It was not right for Moses to do that, and he had to leave the country for forty years for doing it; but I do like to see a man's blood boil at the sight of wrong, even if he does make a mistake in his methods. If I were judge, these men would get off easily. I have always felt more kindly to Abraham after reading that fib he told Pharoah about his good-looking wife. It was mean in him to do it, and dangerous as well; but otherwise Abraham would have been such a perfect character that you and I would not think of trying to imitate him. The story of Jacob's sharp practice with Laban in dividing up the stock, where it was diamond

cut diamond, the sin of David, and the foolishness of Solomon the Wise, all show that the Bible paints men as they are, and not as they should be; and in my feeble way I am trying to do the same thing for you. There is no man that I have ever seen that I would like to hold up to you as a perfect model. We are all but abridgments of a perfect humanity, and the very strength of character in one right line seems almost of necessity to involve a corresponding weakness in some other line.

Of all the types of men I have met, I know few that are more deserving of your imitation than the Brodheads, although some others are equally worthy. Perhaps I take more kindly to these than most others, for the reason that Squire Brodhead was one of my earliest advisors, notwithstanding the disparity in our years. He was my friend and my father's friend. No true man can hold in anything else than very great reverence, the man who has been both his friend, and his father's

friend. A friendship that will last through two generations is of the right sort, and must be based on real merit. Nothing short of genuine worth will bear that sort of strain. I call him "Squire," which he was not legally, but in fact. He was never a justice of the peace. He obtained his title because, when comparatively a young man, he was noted for being able to tell his neighbors, whenever any difficulty occurred between them, what was the right thing to do, and the right time to do it. He was one of those men whose breadth and clearness of view enables them to get at the real rights of things, and he had the wisdom to know what to say and when to say it. He, therefore, became by common consent a sort of arbitrator of difficulties, and general advisor, and they dubbed him "The Squire." I have heard that they tried to elect him once, and did elect him against his consent, but he refused to qualify, by saying that he had a poor opinion of law and of lawyers; did not believe, in fact,

that honest men had anything to do with law, that they lived above it; and quoted the Scripture: "The law was not made for the righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient." He once told me that two of his neighbors quarreled and employed able lawyers, and that he happened to know that one of the lawyers had said to the other: "We have two fat geese to be picked, and we are foolish if we do not get a fine crop of feathers every term of court." He told the litigants this fact, settled their difficulties for them, and made up his mind, as he afterwards told me, that there should be no litigation among his neighbors if he could possibly help it; and therefore he was "The Squire" until the day of his death.

He was a first-class farmer,—one of the best I have ever known. He was not a particularly hard worker. He used to tell me, in fact, that if a man did not work with his brains it was not much matter whether he worked with his hands or not. He seemed to make money easily, and the

neighbors counted him lucky. I once asked him the secret of his success, and he said there was no secret about it; that when everybody wanted to buy, he sold; and when the neighbors wanted to sell, he bought: and that it was always safe to buy as much as you had money to pay for when it was offered at less than the cost of production. When the neighbors quit breeding horses because of the construction of the Pennsylvania railroad, thinking there would be no further market for them, he began growing colts, giving it as his judgment that the development of the country, as the result of steam carriage, would increase the demand for horses far beyond anything that had ever been known before. He was the first in our neighborhood to introduce tile drainage, among the first to grow clover, to use the drill, the mowing machine, the horse rake and the reaper.

He was a man of very decided opinions on any subject on which he would give an opinion at all, and one of the most admir-

able traits of his character was that he had the most profound respect for the exactly opposite opinions held by his neighbors. His cousin James, living on the adjoining farm, was a man of the same mold of character. Both were true Brodheads, differing widely on many subjects, especially on politics and religion; and yet between the two there was never the slightest misunderstanding, or even the suspension of the most intimate personal relations. The Squire was a Presbyterian of the most pronounced type; James was, on all doctrinal points, a good Methodist. The Squire was a Whig, believed in a protective tariff and public improvements, and spelled the word "nation," with a big N; James was a Democrat—other Whigs called him a "Locofoco," the Squire never,—believed in free trade, as little government as possible, was jealous of the encroachments of the national government, spelled both "state" and "nation" with capitals. James always put up a tall hickory pole as soon as the campaign opened; the

Squire allowed his boys to put up a Whig pole as tall, but no taller. The anti-slavery feeling was rising, and the Squire kept a station on the "underground railway." One of his boys was conductor, and many a slave fleeing from bondage, who in some mysterious way had found a hiding place in an obscure corner of his barn, was spirited away to Canada. James believed—and in this differed from nearly all his Methodist brethren, to their great grief and shame—in the rights of the slave-holder as determined by the Dred Scott decision; but he did not allow himself to know, nor his boys, that when the Squire's barn or cellar were likely to be searched, there was a similar place in his barn, provided without his knowledge, where a fugitive might find safety, and often did. Had he known it, he would have told the sheriff, if asked; but he made it a point never to know.

Many a long winter evening have I been an eager listener to the arguments of these men on Divine Sovereignty and free will,

on election and reprobation, on tariff and and free trade, or whatever subject might come up. I have always admired the dignity and courtesy which these old men showed to each other in their discussions, the one never speaking until the other was through; and I have since observed that gentlemen of the highest breeding and most perfect manners, wherever I have found them, do the same. The Squire used to close up his argument on tariff something in this way:

"What is the use, James, of importing a single ton of iron? Don't you see that in importing it from abroad we are importing the ore, the coal, the labor, and the food that it costs to support the laborer and his teams, when we have all these raw materials lying around us cheaper than any place in the world?"

And James would answer, "Don't you know, Squire, that every fall you have to come to me for watermelons and sweet potatoes grown on my sandy bottom, because I can grow them cheaper and better

than you can on your heavy soil? Why not have trade as free between nations as between states, and allow every man to buy where he can buy the cheapest, and sell where he can sell the dearest?"

And they would shake hands, wish each other good night, and in less than a week have another set-to and go over the same, or similar, ground again.

Many years afterwards, when I was a man grown, I met the old Squire, then bent with age, and we talked over the past. He told me of the death of James, and his great grief and loneliness, spoke of the old discussions, and pointing to the hub of an old wagon wheel, with the spokes partly broken off, the felley and tire gone, he said: "You see those ants on that hub. They may be discussing questions similar to those James and I used to discuss. Those two little fellows may be arguing whether the spokes starting in opposite directions can ever meet, concluding in their wisdom that it is impossible, and the older, larger, and wiser ant may be telling

them that they know nothing at all; that he has traveled farther, and can assure them that were this wheel complete, there would be a felley that would bind all the spokes together, and an iron tire around it that would hold them fast; and that seeming contradictions may all be harmonized in the larger field of perfect knowledge. I have no doubt James understands it now, and that I will soon."

I have dwelt long upon the Squire and the Brodhead family. I want you to know them. You will find this type more or less clearly defined in every township and county. In fact, I have found it wherever I have lived or traveled, and if it were not for that type of men, this country, and all countries, would be in a bad way. You will not always find them as lovely in character as my old friend, the Squire. The fact is, his grandmother was a Goodman, and there was a fine blending of these two types in both him and his cousin James. Away back in Bible times, as far back as the period of the Judges, they

are described as men "having understanding of the signs of the times to know what Israel ought to do." They are the men who do not lose their heads in time of danger to state or nation; who take broad views of public, as well as private, business, and who, to use a homely expression, "sense things up about right."

They are not always religious people. I wish they were. The difference between them and the Goodmans is that the Brodheads think things out. The Goodmans feel their way to conclusions, "walk by faith," as it were, while the Brodheads walk more or less "by sight." A man learns to lean on his strongest faculties. If gifted with unusually clear perceptions and the faculty of clear thinking, he learns to depend on his own judgment, his reasoning powers; whereas if he cannot see his way clear, he falls back on his intuitions of right and wrong. The most perfect types of the family see clearly enough, however, that nothing that is morally wrong can be intellectually right; that it

never pays in the long run to be dishonest or unfair; that there are laws not of man's enacting, that remorselessly grind out retribution to all sorts of evil doers, and bring, in time, their just reward to the well doer.

The Brodheads are not all rich, by any means. Few of them, indeed, are very rich. You will frequently find them handling great enterprises for other people, themselves only in moderate circumstances. It is very seldom, indeed, that you will find them poor, or even in limited circumstances, and never, except when some misfortune has happened them which no foresight could avoid. They do not take kindly to what is known as practical politics; that is, to office getting and holding. When a Brodhead and a Featherhead compete for the first time for nomination in any party, the Featherhead has the better chance of winning, because he will do things a Brodhead will not do, and can be used by designing men, which a Brodhead cannot. When you get a Brod-

head into the legislature or congress, however, and he has a chance to make a record, and the people get to know him, he is likely to become a statesman and stay in office as long as he likes.

The Brodheads are not always popular. They are often supposed to be aristocratic and exclusive, for the simple reason that they will not allow themselves to be "hail-fellow-well-met" with everybody. They try to keep themselves out of the dirt, that is all, and I like that feature of their character. They are often blunt in speech and abrupt in manner. That is a fault. They are sometimes blamed for not being sufficiently enthusiastic in a good cause, with being deficient in holy zeal in revival times, and political zeal during heated campaigns. There may be ground for criticism, but I have always noticed that when a real crisis comes in church or state, the men who criticise them for lack of zeal, go to them for counsel.

You see, I am not sketching perfection in character. I could not do it if I would.

It does not exist on earth. I do not set the Brodheads before you as perfect models, for they are not. You will, however, make a serious mistake if you do not study them thoroughly, and get into close, personal touch with them whenever you can. They are among the easiest of all men to approach. They know the right sort of a farm boy on sight and take to him at once, It is otherwise with the Featherheads and their near relatives, the Lightheads. Keep away from men of these types. You can do them no good, nor can they you. The Brodheads can and will. Your future will depend largely on the kind of men with whom you associate. Personally, I owe the Brodheads more than I can tell you. Their advice has not always been what I expected, and they often with me used great plainness of speech which sometimes hurt; but when I have slighted their counsels I have generally had occasion to regret it. I predict that your experience will not differ very greatly from that of your

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER XVII.

TYPES OF COMMON PEOPLE.

My Dear Boy:

When I was your age I used to think that the people most talked about favorably in the papers, and out of them, were those best worth knowing. The preacher, the doctor, the judge, (my mother was always suspicious of lawyers) the members of congress, were all great men in my estimation. I was disposed to look upon the very rich man with something of awe. You may, perhaps, have the same notions. As I grew older in years and experience I changed my opinions somewhat. So will you. I found that the men best worth knowing, the men I could depend upon to stand by me in everything that seemed to them right and just, were not the smartest men, nor the richest, nor those

the newspapers talked about, but the plain, common people, of whom there is usually very little public record beyond the fact that they were born, married, and in time died, leaving more or less of an estate, honestly gathered, to be divided among their wives and children. They do not, it is true, seem to make very much stir in the world, but if they were taken out of it, there would not be much left that is worth preserving, and the end of all things might about as well come at once. We could get along reasonably well with less than half the doctors, with one-fourth the lawyers, and we might even spare a few of the preachers. We could very well spare about nine out of ten of our small politicians, and might get along, in a pinch, without the millionaires; but we could not get along without the common people who rent from others, or own their forties, eighties, quarter sections, or their modest homes in the cities; whose daily toil sweetens their bread, who live honest lives, train their families to habits

of thrift and economy, and who form the sound and honest core of their church, their political party, and, in short, make this nation, and all nations, great.

The sooner you know these people and get in close touch with them, the better for you. They are the real source of what we call "common sense," which, outside of Holy Writ, is the safest guide in all the affairs of life. If you are ever to retain permanently any position of trust and power that you may secure, and thus become a man of wide and commanding influence, you can do it only by being worthy of the abiding confidence of the plain, common people. You have heard, perhaps, of the advice President Lincoln gave to Governor Oglesby, as follows: "Stand by the common people, Richard; keep close to the common people." The deserved confidence which the common people had in Abraham Lincoln was the secret of his great power; and his ability to retain that confidence in the most trying times this nation ever saw, is the most

convincing evidence of his supreme greatness of soul. It was the faith of the common people in Horace Greeley that made him the tribune of the people, and that gave the Tribune the regal power it wielded in those days, so full of peril to the republic. The common people will hear any man gladly who can at once teach the truth and live it.

There are many families, or types, of the common people, but when you come to study them closely, and learn the secrets of their lives, there are a few traits that stand out prominently and are common to almost every type. You will discover that they are honest, not merely in their private affairs, but in their convictions on matters of public concern as well,—honest, not because it pays to be honest, (for this is not honesty at all, but merely enlightened selfishness), but because honesty is RIGHT, and was for ages before Moses voiced the principles of honesty in the Ten Commandments. They are truthful, not because truth has a high commercial

value—which it certainly has—but because untruthfulness is eternally wrong and utterly evil. The common people, as a rule, resent wrong and injustice, despise the despot, and loathe the liar. They believe in their church, in the principles of their party, in plain speaking, right-doing, in good, honest men, and in honest work well done. I do not mean to say they are perfect, for perfection does not exist in this world, nor that they cannot be deceived or misled for the time by designing men, nor that they always recognize their best friends at first sight; but that at heart they mean right, and aim to stand for all that is best and purest in our civilization. I had rather plead a just cause before the plain, common people, than before any court in Christendom, however learned.

I wish you to know these common people, not merely because they have been good to me all my life, and have always stood by me in time of trouble, but because they are in themselves better worth your study than any other class, or all

other classes put together. Take, for example, my old friend, Hodge Plowman. I do not know whether "Hodge" was the name his mother gave him or not. I suspect that he was called "Hodge" for the same reason that we called his Irish neighbor "Pat," and his Scotch neighbor "Sandy." He was an Englishman, a farm laborer in his native country, and never seemed to know exactly how to handle his h's. If he did not know where to put his h's every time, he did know how to handle the plow, and no man in the neighborhood could draw a straighter furrow, nor one more uniform in depth and width. He used to say to me that a bad man could not do good plowing; that it was not bad luck that was the matter with the crops, but crooked furrows of uneven depth and width; and since I have looked into the science of the matter, I believe Hodge was at least partly right. No man could build a stack, whether grain, hay, straw, or even corn fodder, that could equal Hodge Plowman's. I used to tell

him it was a waste of time to stack with such care and precision, and he would say: "What is time given us for but to do things right? I could not sleep of nights if my work was not well done."

These may seem to you small matters, but I have always found that he that is "faithful in the least, is faithful also in much; and he that is unjust in the least, is unjust also in much;" and that it is always well to know, admire, imitate, and win the confidence of the man who does everything as if the Lord had His eye on him all the time. You will not often find that sort of men very far wrong on any of the great questions of life.

I would like you to know my Scandinavian friend, Ole Oleson. You will find men of his type in almost every township in the West. For your benefit I have coaxed him to tell me the story of his life. When he and his young wife, in coming to this country, reached the last station on the railroad, he had but ten cents left and a hundred miles to travel to the home

of the only man he knew in all this broad land. They invested that ten cents in bread, and started out on foot. They got there some way, as resolute folks generally do, hired out, and in time had money enough to enter a quarter section of government land. They built a sod house, in due time earned enough to buy household furniture and a cow, and had to wait until the cow brought them two steer calves, and until they were old enough to work, before Ole could have a a team of his own. It was eight long years before he could walk behind a plow drawn by a team of his own horses. To-day he has nearly three hundred acres of land all his own, no mortgage, well improved, has a good lot in town, hard by the church of his choice—the Lutheran—where he expects to build a comfortable home in case he should ever want to leave the farm, has educated two sons for the professions, has a third for a partner on the farm, is a magistrate, has been county supervisor, and is a man whose friendship

and influence, political and otherwise, is well worth having. There are plenty of men of this type everywhere, and they are well worth your knowing. I had rather have the confidence of a man of this sort, than that of hundreds who make their living by looking after soft snaps; by taking mean advantage of others in their misfortunes, or, to use their own phrase, "living by their wits."

You should know my friend, Sandy McGregor, or some of his kin folks, whom you will run across before you are much older. Sandy was a shepherd lad when he left Scotland, and brought with him a genuine love for oatmeal porridge, and a good understanding of the Shorter Catechism, which two taken together, I have always observed, make a well balanced ration when you are feeding for brains, muscle and morals. Sandy was poor, but none the less hopeful and happy for all that. He was used to it. He went to work at the first job that offered, which was tending bricklayers, won the confi-

dence of the boss of the job, who speedily offered him something better than the hod; kept right on until he got money enough ahead to buy a team and farming outfit. He rented land and finally fastened on an eighty of good land, wrought hard and saved, until he had it paid for. I have often observed that the Sandy McGregors know good land when they see it, and it is not worth while to look for them in a country naturally poor. You would do well to know the Sandy McGregors pretty thoroughly. They are good troops when you need help, but I would advise you not to argue with them on any, and especially a religious, subject on which you are not thoroughly posted. They are apt to be a bit blunt in speech, and may even take delight in setting your sins in order before you; but they like you none the less for all that. They will seldom tell you how much they think of you. In fact, I have heard that they never tell that even to their wives and children. If I had the making of the Sandy McGregors

I would put a little more sweetening in them, and plane off some of the rough edges; but then, we have to take people as we find them, and we can well excuse a little plain speaking if behind it all there is a heart as tender as a woman's, and a profound reverence for the Supreme Being, whom alone Sandy recognizes as Lord of HIS conscience.

Then, there is my old friend, Hans Schmidt. You should "stand in" with him and his kin folks, which you can do best by practicing his virtues, and by dealing with him on honor. You can dicker, if you like, with Sandy McGregor, for he rather likes the keen encounter of wits in fixing prices. He knows what he is going to take before hand, and you know what you will give, and there is some amusement after all in dickering; but you had better make but one price in your dealing with Hans. Hans is a hard worker, patient, tireless, economical, a man of deep affections, and delights as much as any man I ever knew in his home life. He is

a good liver when he can afford it, and knows how to live economically when he must. When you once get his confidence he is your steadfast friend; but woe be to you if you forfeit that confidence by any sort of trickery or deception, either in word or deed.

Nor would I have you forget Patrick Maloney, and his ilk. His great-great-grandfather and mine used to enjoy cracking each other's skulls on Fair days, and at other times, over politics and religion. Pat's ancestor thought mine was a robber, and a heretic; and my ancestor thought Pat's was a "bloodthirsty Papist," who would burn him at the stake, if he could, and so they had it out with each other whenever they had a chance, and from what I can learn, they seldom lacked, or neglected to improve, an opportunity. Mr. Maloney and I often talk these matters over, and we understand each other, and give each other credit for sincerity and good intentions, even if we do not always agree. He honestly thinks my

religion is too much of a head religion, and I am sometimes inclined to think he is about half right. I think, on the other hand, that he is inclined to take too much for granted, and relies too much on outward forms. But we are both good-humored about it, and talk much less about that than some other things on which we are entirely agreed. For example, we are both agreed in our hatred of oppression and tyranny of every kind; we believe in honest dealing and fair play; we both applaud when Sandy McGregor sings his favorite song, "A man's a man for a' that, and a' that," and I assure you that you will find no better friends in the world than the Patrick Maloneys, if you stand firmly for the rights of the common people, and your own.

There is another large class of our native common people whom you should know intimately and thoroughly. You will not only lose much by not knowing them, but their history will furnish you material for a lifetime of study. I mean

that very large combination of several types whose ancestors from time to time sought in the wilds of the then new country refuge, not from grinding poverty, but from oppression in various forms; who sought in the republic, not worldly gain, but religious freedom. In their various original types they were the Puritans, whose ancestors fought with Cromwell and gave England civil liberty; the Huguenots, of France, of whom Milton sang, "Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints;" the devout Protestants, of the Netherlands; the Scotch and Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, who for ages had never been so happy as when fighting for a good cause, and who blazed the way in the forests north and south, and brought with them the log college, as well as the church and schoolhouse; and the Quakers, the men who were wont to listen to the monitions of the inward voice, and were as thoroughly men of peace as the last named were men of war. One hundred and fifty years and more of the enjoyment of civil and relig-

lous liberty have welded all these and other kindred types into a native, or peculiarly American type, the molding and dominating type among the native common people, and which seems by an irresistable power to take hold of and assimilate Hodge, Ole, Sandy, Pat, Hans, and whoever else may come, to digest, so to speak, every type that seeks, for any reason, to share the blessings which Providence has showered on this broad land, absorbing their virtues and casting off their vices. Especially is this type the controlling, dominating force in the rural districts where the common, everyday virtues grow and thrive better than in the glare and noise of the more public life of the great cities.

It is the homes of these common people, native and foreign, that have ever been the nurseries of the men who have made this nation great, and guided it through all its perils, and all the more easily because the great leaders that have been brought up in these homes have kept

themselves in close touch and entire sympathy with the men who make up the "town meeting," as the New Englanders would say, or, as we say in the West, the township primary.

So long as you stay on the farm you will find it all important to your happiness and success to have the confidence of all that is best in country life. If you go into business or the professions, you will find that confidence a tower of strength, and if you ever enter upon a public career, you will sooner or later be undone without it. You may fool the common people once or twice; you may sell their confidence to their foes, but you cannot fool them always; and whenever they find you out, as they will, you are undone forever, and may look upon their verdict as a foretaste of the retribution which a just and righteous God inflicts sooner or later on those of whom it is said: "Their foot shall slide in DUE TIME."

UNCLE HENRY.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GOOD MAN.

My Dear Boy:

In examining a piece of machinery which you have never before seen, neither have read nor heard of, the first question that arises in your mind is: what is it good for? What was the object of the inventor in designing it, and the builder in making it? The question will sooner or later arise in your mind, if it has not already, as to what this world is good for. What was the final and ultimate object of the Creator, to use the language of the Scriptures, in founding it upon the floods, in stretching over it the firmament, in watering it with showers, in storing it with fuel and minerals, in planting it with grains and fruits and weeds, healthful and poisonous, in stocking it with beasts and

birds, helpful and hurtful, in giving it every variety of climate and scenery, and every combination of soil, from total barrenness to the most lavish fertility, and in constantly guiding it and controlling it through all the ages?

We know of but one answer that can be rightly made, namely, this world was made, and is now governed for the production of the good man—the man whose ideas of justice, mercy, and of truth are a more or less distinct reflection of Him who is Justice, Mercy and Truth; whose tenderness, thoughtfulness, and compassion are a reflection, however dim, of the tenderness, thoughtfulness and compassion of Almighty God. If this be not the object in view in the creation and government of this world, then it seems to me to be a horrible mistake and a pitiable failure. If this be the object, then you will be co-worker and helper with the Power that is above and behind all things, if it be the supreme aim of your life to be a good man, to form a character that will be a re-

flection of the Character which guides and controls all things below, and to do this right thing, and avoid that wrong, not for appearance sake, nor for profit, nor for even an example to others, but because of its bearing on the formation of your own character.

A good man, like all other things esteemed good, has many counterfeits. I would not have you become in the slightest degree, the goody-goody man, the man who is so weak in intellect, or deficient in force of character, so lacking in manliness that he is in no man's way, who in one way or other constantly parades his imagined goodness and demands your admiration. The sun needs no placard announcing, "This is the sun." The man who finds it necessary to tell you that he is a good man, will need constant watching. He knows that he is not to be trusted, and in professing superior goodness, when his goodness is not called in question, he is simply aiming to smother the suspicion, constantly arising in his own mind, that he is at heart a rogue.

I would have you constantly on your guard against that hoary old hypocrite who has made an idol of some creed or confession, and stands ready to denounce all who do not believe in it as beyond the possibility of redemption, whose goodness consists in bewailing the sins of others, and who, if occupying a position in a church or society, is ready to pounce with almost savage delight on some young man or woman who has sinned or gone wrong, as though he himself were sinless. When a lot of these gray-haired scoundrels brought a real sinner before the only absolutely good man that ever lived, and asked his judgment, he gave it to them as follows: "Let him that is without sin among you, cast the first stone," stoning to death being the legal penalty. Without a word they went out from his presence, "beginning at the eldest," observing even in their defeat and confusion all the forms of ecclesiastical etiquette. The church suffers more to-day from this form of bastard goodness than from all the cavils and scoffs of the infidel.

I have spent some time in sketching for your use various types of good men whom it has been my good fortune to know personally and intimately in the last fifty years; some in the lowliest walks of life, men and women who in straitened circumstances, and even in extreme poverty, were enabled by a power not of this world, to maintain their honor and integrity unspotted, and walk by a clear light, which came from neither sun, moon nor stars, and which I can liken only to the unclouded light of the Divine Countenance. Others were well-to-do farmers, living testimonies in favor of all things good, right, and pure, who did not need to say that there was not a stain on a dollar they owned. The whole neighborhood knew that. Others still, who, amid the glare of wealth, and the greedy scramble for gain, were living witnesses of the truth of the old saying, "Godliness is profitable in all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and that which is to come." Still others, amid all the strife and contention

of political life, have been able to die poor men in order that the common people of this land might have just, wise laws, faithfully administered. Of these last I think it may be said at the last day, "These have come up out of great tribulation," for I verily believe that the severest test of character in these modern times has been made when a public man successfully overcomes the temptation to enrich himself in the public service by treachery to the common people while eating their bread.

I will not show you these sketches I have made because they all seem to me far short of even my own ideal of a good man, and I cannot find it in my heart to point out to you why and wherein they failed, as they each have in some respect. Rather would I point out to you the only perfect Life that has ever been lived on this planet, and ask you to take your ideal from that, and reverence every man in the proportion that he has realized in his life that perfect ideal. If I were to define the

good man in words, I would say that he is the man who sincerely believes in a just, and therefore merciful, God, and who does his best every day of his life, whether in a high position, or a low, to do His will. I base goodness on right convictions, and I do not know of any other source of right convictions than faith in the Supreme Ruler of this world. There is a superficial goodness, not consciously simulated, that is a matter of habit, of good surroundings and associations, of environment, so to speak, which readily passes for the genuine until it is severely tried, and then it usually fails utterly. I have ever found in my life that the man who has no genuine convictions anchored in something outside of this world, will not do to "tie to." When tried he will be "like a broken tooth or a foot out of joint." It is the men who believe in the eternal verities who have secured for themselves and for us the rights and liberties we enjoy as a people, and who were ready to die, and many of whom did die, that we might enjoy them.

If I were to define the good man still further, I would say he lives constantly under oath. His word is his oath because always spoken under the conviction, more or less conscious, "Thou God seest me." His words are spoken and acts done as if in the presence of the Supreme Ruler, and hence his farm, his home, his place of business, are as sacred as the communion table. You will discover as you grow older and more experienced, that one of the best evidences of human goodness is the manifestation of pity for, and charitable judgment of, the man or woman, and especially of the young man or woman, who has unintentionally and without forethought, gone wrong. It s said of the one sinless Being that he could have compassion o the ignorant and those that are out of the way: "Who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was tempted in all points like as we are, and yet without sin."

The man who is glad to find sin , others. thereby confesses his own sinful-

ness. The man who is swift to condemn, and especially without hearing both sides, plainly shows his lack of real goodness. Every man who is striving to walk in the paths of uprightness, will have genuine pity for those who have striven and failed. Every man who knows the dangers that lurk in the path of the young man or woman, who knows how easy it is to sin without intending it, who knows something of the power of inherited evil, and who has seen a little of the inexpressible cruelty and heartlessness of what Burns calls the "unco' guid," or the overmuch good, man, will, if he be a good man and true, cover up the fault, and try to lift the fallen.

A young peasant girl, barefoot, and plainly but neatly dressed, was once brought before a Scotch session for the sin of joining in a simple country dance. The elders dealt out to the poor child the terrors of the law, until she burst into tears, when the old preacher, who had been a country lad himself, said: "Jennie, were ye thinking o' anything wrang when

ye danced?" "Indeed, I was not." "Then, Jennie, my child, aye dance."

If I were to give you an infallible sign of a good man, I would say that he is the man, who, while holding himself rigidly to the highest standard of living, yet deals with the greatest leniency with those who have sinned. He draws sharp and clear the distinction between the wrong and the wrongdoer. Instead of trying to crush those who have fallen in the strife, he aims to place their feet in the right path, saying in the words of the Master, "Go, and sin no more."

Do not think I am preaching you a sermon, for I am not. I have written you much in these letters regarding the conduct of your life on its secular, or worldly, side. I wish you to succeed in every praiseworthy and right thing; to make money on the farm, or off it, if you prefer that; to have you honored by your fellow-men; but above all, I would like you to be a good man, not merely for your own sake, but because the world

needs good men much more than it needs either rich men or great men. I would like you to be a good man in the truest sense of the word; a man who is not only on the right side of all public questions, but right in all his dealings, in his influence at home, and away from home, for the reason that the final, perfect and complete harvest which this world yields to the hand of its Maker, is a crop of good men and women. I would like you to be one of the sheaves, and not a weed to be destroyed.

I think most farm boys sincerely desire to be good men. The trouble is that they do not know just how to go about it. How do you learn to plow if not by plowing? You may read about plowing for months, you may watch other men plow, but you will never learn to plow except by plowing. The man who made the plow may tell you all about the construction of it, and how to mend it when out of repair. That will be a great help provided you plow; otherwise not. He who has

made you has told you what you must do to be a good man. You will find it in the one book of all others which we call the Bible, or the Book; but you will never understand a precept of that Book rightly except by the doing of it. You can do it best right at home, by showing respect and obedience to your father and mother, kindness to your brothers and sisters, by doing good, conscientious work on the farm, and standing for right things among the boys. You can set yourself to thinking and doing those things, the doing of which forms the right character. You will not go far on these lines until you feel the need of that Elder Brother who is revealed to you, and to me, as the ideal Man, which is God manifest in the flesh, who, as the Divine Man, has made atonement, once for all, for your sin and mine, and you will find in Him a never-failing Helper. You cannot commit your all to Him and enlist in His service too soon.

You will get help from unexpected sources when you need it; seldom before

you need it. I believe it to be everlastingly true that "the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way." By this I understand that not only do the laws of this world work, in the end, for righteousness in a general way, but that there is an Overruling Providence that shapes and marks out the path of one who is sincerely aiming and striving to be a good man, and guides his steps therein. I believe with David, that "Though he [the good man] fall, he will not be cast down utterly, because the Lord upholds him mightily with His right hand." I believe the Father in his wise providence, deals with good men more severely, if they do wrong, than he does with evil men, and that because he loves them better; that bad men will be allowed to prosper for a time in certain courses where good men would fail; just as a father would punish his son for doing things which he would no more than rebuke in the son of a neighbor. We often see this principle illustrated, even in mod-

ern politics. A good man who has done wrong and made a mistake is left at home; and a scoundrel who has done the same thing, and others ten times worse, is given office in his stead. It is strange, but it is not all wrong, Good men who go wrong deserve punishment. The Lord will attend to the scoundrels when he gets ready. No man, however, will ever go far wrong if he takes counsel with his conscience, and uses that Word which "is a lamp unto his feet and a light unto his path." If you are in doubt as to whether a thing is right, don't do it.

Instead of being a hindrance to you in business, as you may at first suppose, and and as many would have you suppose, the character which I have urged you to form will help you in the most wonderful way. There is not now, nor has there ever been, enough of boys who live and work on this high plane and follow these exalted ideals to supply the demand. Almost every great enterprise of any kind is constantly on the lookout for this type of

character, and for the all-sufficient reason that great undertakings can be safely entrusted to no other. I have seen conspicuous ability and untiring energy fail utterly when not accompanied by that high moral character, that unbending integrity, characteristic of the good man, as I have described him. All great enterprises and undertakings depend for their success on the faith or confidence of the public in the men who control them. Unless these men have those traits of character that will win and retain confidence, failure, in time, is inevitable. There is nothing, therefore, in the end that pays such high dividends, even in this life, as old-fashioned righteousness, or uprighteousness, which is a peculiar characteristic of the good man.

I desire, above all things else, that you be a good man. The good man is of the seed royal of the universe, the golden harvest, the ripened fruitage of creation. For him the deep foundations of the world were laid. For him the ages have been

preparing. For his redemption "the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us," and the cross erected on Calvary. For his perfection is all the work, the toil, the pain and suffering among men, and when, chastened by experience, and ripened by the wisdom which years only can give, he enters the house prepared for him. And for which he has been prepared, its doors will spring open of their own accord, and he will be welcomed by all that is good, beautiful and true in the universe of God.

UNCLE HENRY.

THE END.

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